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TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Editor: K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO

'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the elect. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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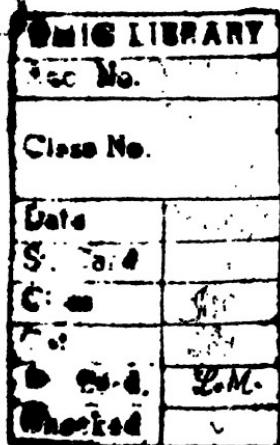
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ILLUSTRATIONS

'The Supreme Offering'
By K. A. M. Sastry

Tri-coloured Frontispiece

Dr. Rangachariar



. . . he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !
—The Song Celestial

The Triple Stream'

THE NEW 'TRIVENI'

The last volume of *Triveni* was commenced under happy auspices, but like an ugly sum in arithmetic it went wrong somewhere. Even as the impatient schoolboy rubs it out and starts working a fresh sum, the Editor abandons the sixth volume half-way and begins the seventh.

The cover design for the new year is the handiwork of Adivi Bapiraju, the gifted Andhra poet and painter. When *Triveni* was born in 1928, Bapiraju designed the first cover and acted as Associate Editor for a time. After six years, this dear friend once again stamps *Triveni* with his genius. He calls up a vision of the *Triveni* of our dreams, the goddess of the flowing dark tresses, floral crowned and decorated with the *makara* (crocodile), the *kurma* (tortoise) and the *padma* (lotus). These three are the *vahanas* (vehicles) of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, the three streams which symbolize the power, the love, and the wisdom of the *Triveni*.

The frontispiece is a reproduction in colours of Ananda Mohan's painting in Moghul style, 'The Supreme Offering'. It depicts the famous episode of the Emperor Babar offering his life, in order that his dearly loved son Humayun may be snatched from Death. Like the old court painters of Agra and Delhi, Ananda Mohan works out the minutest details with infinite care, and produces a picture of exquisite beauty and grace.

Triveni starts again on its course. Being an incurable optimist, the Editor hopes it will nevermore lose its way.

THE GREATEST INDIANS

Mr. K. Iswara Dutt indulges in the 'pleasant pastime' of naming the eleven greatest living Indians. His list is almost

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'ideal, and likely to meet with the approval of thinking men everywhere. But which amongst us is without personal preferences? For instance, the Editor would not deem any list satisfactory if it left out Sri Aurobindo and Sri J. Krishnamurti, who have not only 'affected the mind of their generation' but promise to change the trend of human thought and aspiration for ages yet unborn. When Time takes its revenges, these two may be remembered and their names cherished, along with that of Gandhiji, as the three greatest Indians of the twentieth century. Mr. Iswara Dutt's list would improve vastly by their inclusion, even at the risk of omitting two out of the three votaries of science. Similarly the great art movement of today in India owes its inception and its success to Doctors Ananda Coomaraswamy and Abanindranath Tagore. The name of one of the politicians may give place to that of either of these interpreters of Indian art.

These are suggestions offered in a spirit of friendliness and not meant to detract from the value of Mr. Dutt's roll of illustrious Indians, every one of whom is entitled to our respectful homage. Mr. Dutt's is a closely reasoned and sprightly essay; it ought to bring as much pleasure to the readers of *Triveni* as it did to the Editor himself. Modern India is rich in its great men and women, and we can never have too many of them.

THE CONGRESS

With the virtual withdrawal of civil disobedience as a weapon for the winning of Swaraj, and the decision to contest the elections to the Assembly, the Congress becomes a constitutional body functioning under normal conditions. The Government, on their side, have raised the ban on all Congress organisations, and Congressmen are therefore busy setting their house in order and taking up the threads that were snapped during the first week of January 1932. To all outward appearance, the Congress has suffered a reverse. •

The position seems to be very much like what it was at the Amritsar session of the Congress in December 1919.

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The White Paper replaces the Montford Reforms of that day. Only a thin line then separated the Liberals and the Nationalists, which became a wide gulf when the former allied themselves with Montagu to form provincial ministries and the latter boycotted the legislatures. Today too, the difference between the Congressman and the non-Congress nationalist is mainly one of temperament. For there is no talk of wrecking the legislatures or of consistent and continuous obstruction. Opposition to the White Paper and the demand for the repeal of repressive laws are negative items, and not enough to mark the Congress off from the other parties. As the months pass, however, differences in outlook are bound to be emphasised between those that sacrificed their all in order to engage in a perilous fight with the Government, and the rest who quietly walked into the legislatures and the cabinets while that fight was at its grimmest. Despite occasional set-backs, the Congress is the one political body with a nation-wide following. A well-disciplined phalanx of selfless workers can offer battle on the only front that seems available, and compel the Government to respect the wishes of a Constituent Assembly. Communal and parochial interests may seek to cloud the issue, but the Congress retains the nation's love as well as the right to speak on the nation's behalf.

BUILDING FROM WITHIN

There are thousands of Congress workers in every province who are unable to enthuse themselves over the councils. They are in sympathy with the Congress, and may help it in the coming elections. But council work as such has no appeal for them. They feel that the reasons for which the Congress boycotted the legislatures in 1920 are still valid. These Congressmen formed the bulk of the 'no-changers' of 1924. Once the elections are over, they would like to devote their entire energy to those nation-building activities that have all along constituted their first love. Work in the councils can absorb but a fraction of the time and attention of

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the Congress. The huge task of harnessing the enthusiasm of youth and the wisdom of advancing years to constructive ends will naturally fall to the Congress.

But alongside of such tangible outer activity, there must be a process of building from within for every Congress worker. For over a decade, the flower of the nation have given up wealth, comfort, and careers. During a period of stress and misfortune, even intellectual nourishment has been eschewed as a luxury fit only for more peaceful times. A whole generation of young men and women has denied itself the culture that sustains and uplifts. While their emotions have been enriched, their intellect has been starved. We believe it was this aspect of the nation's struggle that Dr. Hardiker had in view when he pleaded for an opportunity for quiet study and recuperation. Art and literature, history and philosophy are the most prized possessions of a race, and continued neglect of them will lead to impoverishment of the spirit. Institutions like the Kashi Vidyapith, the Gujarat Vidyapith, and the Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala ought to address themselves to this supreme duty of giving the workers a chance to come into direct contact with the springs of national culture. After a period of study and meditation, they may go forth to re-organise the countless villages in the land as efficient units of a Swaraj India.

NORTH AND SOUTH

The Hindi *pracharakas* of South India had a very eventful tour in the North. Everywhere, they were welcomed most warmly. Ruling Princes like H. H. The Maharaja Gaekwad, and learned bodies like the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, praised their work as a valuable contribution to a closer association between North and South. His Highness, in particular, signified his desire to have the best literature in the South Indian languages translated into Hindi. At Santiniketan, the Poet admitted that Hindi had the largest claims to become the national language of India. But he emphasised the need for a more intensive cultivation of the different provincial

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literatures. The best work could be done only through the mother-tongue of a writer, and therefore literary men all over India should employ that medium. According to him, it is the duty of scholars in Hindi provinces to enrich their literature by translating the masterpieces in the other Indian languages. The Poet's view ought to receive the widest attention.

Another batch of South Indians left Madras early in July, not to tour North India, but to settle down at important centres of Hindi learning and study Hindi in its purest form for some years. As a complement to this process of emigration from the South, groups of students from the Hindi-speaking provinces should similarly settle down at Bangalore, Madura, or Masulipatam to make a study of the South Indian languages. A decade of such cultural contact will break down the barriers of language and promote a keener appreciation of the literature of each province.

'THE 'RAMĀYANA'

The epic of Valmiki is not merely the earliest poem in classical Sanskrit: after the lapse of over twenty centuries, it continues to be nearest the heart of every devout Hindu. As the story of Rama, the hero-prince through whom God fulfilled himself, and of Sita, his long-suffering consort, the *Ramayana* is the joy and the solace of millions. For many men and women in India, the reading of a few *sargas* of the *Ramayana* is almost the first item of the day's programme, for it is great literature as well as great scripture.

There are many and conflicting texts of the epic. Mr. R. Narayanaswami Iyer, the learned and pious proprietor of the Madras Law Journal Press, has brought out a magnificent edition at an incredibly cheap price (Rupees Four). With the aid of a band of distinguished South Indian scholars headed by Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastriar, innumerable copies of the epic, including old palm-leaf manuscripts, have been collated. The best reading is incorporated in the text, and alternative readings are given in the

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footnotes. Textual criticism, indices, and all the 'scaffolding' of scholarship add to the value of this edition. Mr. K. Ram Mohan Sastri has painted some of the striking incidents. His unusual mastery of technique and sense of colour values make the pictures dreams of beauty. 'The Passing of Dasaratha', 'Bharata worshipping the Sandals', and 'Agni (the God of Fire) restoring Sita to her Lord' are of outstanding merit. The frontispiece, 'The coronation of Sri Rama', is somehow disappointing.

We commend this edition of the epic for the acceptance of lovers of Indian culture.

My Brother

(A Poem)

By SHRI J. KRISHNAMURTI

My Brother died :
We were as two stars in a naked sky.

He was like me,
Burnt by the warm sun,
In the land where are soft breezes,
Swaying palms,
And cool rivers,
Where there are shadows numberless,
Bright-coloured parrots and chattering birds:

Where green tree-tops
Dance in the brilliant sun :
Where there are golden sands
And blue-green seas :

Where the world lives in the burden of the sun,
And the earth is baked dull brown ;
Where the green-sparkling rice fields
Are luscious in slimy waters,
And shining, brown, naked bodies
Are free in the dazzling light :

The land
Of the mother suckling her babe by the roadside ;
Of the devout lover
Offering gay flowers ;
Of the wayside shrine ;
Of intense silence ;
Of immense peace.

He died ;
I wept in loneliness.

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Where'er I went, I heard his voice
And his happy laughter.
I looked for his face
In every passer-by,
And asked each if he had met with my brother ;
But none could give me comfort.

I worshipped.
I prayed.
But the gods were silent.
I could weep no more ;
I could dream no more.
I sought him in all things,
In every clime.

I heard the whispering of many trees,
Calling me to his abode.

And then,
In my search,
I beheld Thee,
O Lord of my heart ;
In Thee alone
I saw the face of my brother.

In Thee alone,
O my eternal Love,
Do I behold the faces
Of all the living and all the dead.¹

¹ From: *The Song of Life*, by special permission of The Star Publishing Trust, Ommen, Holland.

Mr. Bendre and His Poetry

By PROF. V. K. GOKAK, M.A.

(*The Fergusson College, Poona*)

(1)

In trying to define the aims and methods of the criticism of contemporaries, Lemaitre remarked :

'It is perhaps not well to begin by a criticism of their faults . . . Such criticism as leads immediately to general aesthetic considerations is interesting in itself, but it tells us almost nothing concerning the books which are its ostensible objects and may even easily distort them. The criticism which seeks to assign to new books their place in the history of literature and to explain their appearance is often premature. That which classifies them at once is very arrogant and exposes itself to sharp contradictions . . . But is it not just and necessary to begin . . . with a sympathetic reading of such books, in order to arrive at a definition of what element they contain that is original and belongs strictly to the writer?'

Thus it is clear that the path of a critic of contemporary poetry is strewn with thorns, though he may find 'Roses, roses all the way'. Mr. D. R. Bendre, B.A., whose poetry is the subject of this article, is one of those scatterers of roses, the leading poets of renascent Karnatak. And if I set out on this hazardous enterprise of writing a critique on his poetry, it is with the epistolary command of the Editor of the *Triveni* as my pilgrim's staff and with a few remarks of some of the eminent critics of Karnatak as my pilgrim's scrip that I venture to do so. And, by the way, I have been treading too often on these thorns to mind their presence at all.

The following remarks will explain why Mr. Bendre's poetry has a genuine attraction for the *Triveni*. Mr. T. N.

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Srikantaiya of Mysore,—a distinguished critic who is young but austere, creative and critical,—observed while reviewing *Gari*, a collection of Mr. Bendre's poems: ‘Some of his poems, at any rate, deserve a place in the literature of the world.’ And Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, one of the spiritual begetters of modern Kannada literature, has recorded in the Mysore Census Report of 1932 (a rich and strange place, by the way, in which to exercise literary censorship!): ‘D. R. Bendre's poetry shows also a vivid imagination and grace and power of expression characteristic of the best poetry.’ This is well said indeed. It enables me to do what otherwise I should have felt slightly uncomfortable in doing,—to indulge in a long and rambling account of Mr. Bendre and his poetry.

A word as to the methods employed in this article. I will press the grapes of my grasp so much and only so far as makes them yield the hidden meaning of life which Lemaitre would have us observe: ‘To define the author to describe his “form,” to delineate his temperament—what the world means to him and what he seeks in it by preference.’ There will only be so much of estimation and evaluation as lies implicit in an appreciative interpretation. For Mr. Bendre is a very near phenomenon to me. I have talked with him so often and so long that I am at a loss to know what I should put down on paper and what not to write. Times out of number have we walked hand in hand, so much so that I can never conceive of holding him at arm's length, of pushing him about on the palm of my hand and feeling him with all my fingers, of examining his lustre in ‘minute particulars’ and using that sort of jargon. I have been so constant a listener to the poetry which he chants with his magic utterance that I live too much in the heart of that light to note its ‘form’ and lineaments. I feel like a native of the tracts round Mount Etna, —a man who is too familiar with the lava and the burning fumes which the volcano casts out at every eruption, to plunge himself headlong down its crater like the mad but philosophic Empedocles!

And yet, after all, this is a sovereign advantage which I

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possess over the other admirers of my subject. There are certain pranks and whims of a poet which only his friends can know. There are certain delicate whiffs of fancy, swift and fine turns of thought, which only a few kindred souls can catch. These may help us to postulate a more intimate relation between the impression we form of the poet and the expression he moulds for us..

Thus, for instance, the fact that Mr. Bendre is short of stature and presents a rugged growth, as of some thistle deep-rooted in the earth, and a rough exterior ; that his benign expression indicates a serenity and majesty of thought stamped over agonising feelings ; that his voice rises shrill and high like a lark in its flight when he forgets himself in talk ; and that his eyes are deep wells of ancient wisdom : all this is as much an emanation of his spirit as the poetry which is its revelation.

When I approach, therefore, this part of my subject, I will speak with full-throated ease. And in doing so I will be clarifying Bendre's self to myself. For, when all is said and done, it remains a fact that man knows nothing in the absolute, not even himself. As for the other points dismissed curtly by Lemaitre,—the faults of the poet, and the position he is to occupy in literary history : and general æsthetic consideration and classification ;—why, we may have something of these too. For these are but the singer-posts that lead us to the man himself. All criticism is a platform on which to display the eternal Argument. It is a scaffolding so cleverly devised as to trap the hare, to make it stay if only for a moment. And all possible waylaying and ambuscade is permissible provided it facilitates the ultimate arrangement.

(2)

History is a strange dame to be reckoned with. Many reputations suffer when she is gamesome : and many insignificant points gather significance. Some months ago a distinguished critic prophesied in *The Bookman* that, a hundred years hence, Yeats' poems would survive and be read for

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their essential beauty, while T. S. Eliot's poems would be remembered mainly for their experimental interest. Granting for the time being that the value of T. S. Eliot's work lies chiefly in its novelty, does not the statement mean that poetry which is not very poetical will endure side by side with work which is essential poetry? And history is responsible for this misdemeanour. From one point of view, history is a museum where fossils and mummies are carefully preserved. From another standpoint, it is the time honoured theatre where the eternal drama of human passion and aspiration is staged with clever manipulation.

I think that T. S. Eliot's poetry stands for an experience, not simply for an experiment. He is certainly not a mere figure made by history. I would say the same about Mr. Bendre. The position he holds in Kannada letters today is only a rough and ready indication of his integral achievements. Nor, on the other hand, is he a figure who has *made* the history of modern Kannada poetry, though he is undoubtedly an *event* in its tremendous course. It seems to me that no human being can *make* history unless history conspires with him and allows him to be called its maker. And its makers are like the adventurers of old who claimed to be the masters of a continent because they were the first to behold it. The following facts will make it possible for the reader to see that Mr. Bendre was instrumental in determining the course of the history of Kannada poetry for a number of years. His poetry owes something at least of its reputation to the time and place of its appearance.

The Renaissance was lingering like a 'Polar dawn' in Karnatak some twenty years ago. Muddana, the morning star, had already bequeathed his last scintillations. The signs of a new ferment were perceptible as early as in the eighteen-fifties with the work of some missionaries and learned pundits. But the æsthetic crystallisation of this new consciousness had not yet taken place on a grand scale except with Muddana. And in poetry the attempts were too sporadic to establish and popularise the inauguration of a new

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tradition. The air was big with unseen destinies ; but as yet it was only an invisible influence that was stirring the educated minds.

The period 1885–1915 may, in one sense, be called the period of preparation. The *Epigraphia Karnatica* and the *kavicharite* volumes were being published in Mysore. The *kavya kalanidhi* series opened up the treasures of ancient poetry to the Kannada public so that the works of a poet like Muddana could be produced with ease. The efforts of Kittel and other missionaries were equally great on Mangalore side, considering the fact that the Kittel dictionary holds out, even today, unexplored possibilities to every literary adventurer. The *Vidya Vardhaka Sangha* at Dharwar had already come into its own with the *Vagbhushana* as its literary mouthpiece. The Kannada schools had been opened in North Karnatak as early or as late as 1872. And enthusiasts and scholars like Toormari, Chennabasappa, Mulabagal, Santa Kavi and V. R. Katti were preparing the soil for the rich harvest that was to follow. With the sounding of the *Sahitya Parishat* in 1914, the Renaissance had been rightfully enthroned. The political and cultural consciousness of the Kannada public was being worked up by veterans like Alur Venkataraao and Mudavidu Krisnarao. And a reading public was being gradually created by versatile writers like B. Venkatachar, Galganath, and Kerur.

With these remarks we may confine ourselves to the poetical aspect of the new movement. Not much is known about Hyderabad and the surrounding parts of Karnatak. Perhaps much did not happen there at that time. Strange and antiquated—and in many ways insignificant—books were pouring from Bellary and the other Ceded Districts. The situation was slightly different in Mysore. There was the long line of pundits aiming at the eighteen essentials of the epic and hammering at the hundred and one *alankaras*. Basavappa Sastri of *Sakuntala* fame is the gifted representative of the School. A slight variation of the themes and methods was practised by S. G. Narasimhachar in his *Ajan-*

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rupa Charite and elsewhere but his career was cut short by his premature death. A few of Prof. B. M. Srikantia's translations of English poems had been published in the *Vidyadaryinec* but the volume called *Englishu Geetegalu* had not yet seen the light of day. And it was only about the year 1920 that Mr. D. V. Gundappa published his *Vasanta Kusumanjali* and 'Srinivasa'¹ came out with his *Binnaha*.

Mangalore unfolds a similar tale. The famous monthly called *Suvasini* (with Mr. B. Ramarao as one of its editors) had just been stopped but *Kannada Kokile* and *Krishna Sukt* were carrying on their work. Mr. Muliye Timmapaya had been producing *Sobagina Balli* and other compositions which reveal a Muddana-like attitude towards the new and the old. Panje Mangesarao, Govinda Pai and M. N. Kamat were definitely of the new band and had been giving the public an insight into the trend of the new movement.

Thus we find that the new poetry found itself mostly in the condition of protoplasm by the year 1915.² The battle had been won, however, within five years to come and the departure itself became an opening for others to follow. Then it was that the public became enamoured of the 'grooves of change'.

But it is with the poetry of North Karnatak that we are immediately concerned. Much the same state of affairs was prevalent therein. The poets, all of whom belonged more or less to the traditional school, may be grouped as follows, corresponding to their approach towards modernism: Srinivasarao Katti, Mulabagal, V. M. Tatti, Santa Kavi and *Kavyananda*. Kerur, the literary pioneer, and *Kannada Yamana* were the leading practitioners in the new line. But in poetry, at any rate, their work was not massive and intense enough to widen the public consciousness.

Thus it is easily seen that Mr. Bendre stands in a line with those workers who carried the new poetry in their hearts till about the year 1920 and then struck out unique and recognised paths to themselves. The new poetry obviously won

¹ Sriman Masti Venkatesu Iyengur.

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a general hearing during the period 1915—22. And Mr. Bendre effected the change in North Karnatak just as Prof. B. M. Srikantia, ‘Srinivasa’, Mr. D. V. Gundappa and Messrs. Panje Mangesarao, Govinda Pai and M. N. Kamat did it in Mysore and Mangalore. Messrs. Khanolkar and Betigeri were the only two participators in the task, since Mr. R. S. Sali descended later into the arena.

We may now inquire into the nature of the reputation which Mr. Bendre’s poetry has acquired during the last few years.

The poets literally leave their souls on earth. They could not otherwise be at home with the generations that follow. And every soul left on earth preserves with it the history of the manner in which it was perpetuated in the memory of mankind.

To track this history is itself a highly instructive and amusing task. It points out the strange and inexplicable by-paths pursued by the spirit of man and perchance by his destiny. That Shakespeare hardly left a line of his imperishable dramatic poetry in his own handwriting ; that Tennyson was revising his work with an amount of patience and care which almost leaves us in doubt as regards the intrinsic worth of some of the poetry itself ; that Purandaradasa and others died chanting their hymns when very few would reduce them to writing : all these are strange facts that leave us wondering at the dubious value of literary history and posthumous reputation.

In this and in many other respects I think that Mr. Bendre is a fatalist. A kind of philosophic indeterminism permeates his being. In the grand chase of the eternal procession that he has opened up for himself, poetry is only a small rabbit that has scarcely received much attention at his hands. He pats it now and then, sets it on its path and feeds it with a few crumbs from his platonic banquets ; but that is all. He lives and talks poetry ; he writes it less often. His imagination feeds on many unwritten novels, dramas and epic poems. But he does not seem to have relished the task

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of putting pen to paper. A friend of mine, one of our distinguished short story writers, was telling me the other day that Bendre is in the habit of talking short stories, and lamented that a distinct type of fiction, representing Bendre's analytic genius, should be lost to Kannada literature. I would say the same about his aesthetic theories, poetry and what not. Let me hope (though it is to hope against hope!) that this protest registered in print will at least make him realise the injustice he is doing to himself and others.

But in his tenderer moods Bendre will give us an explanation though not a defence. He will tell us that, however we may try to rough-hew our ends, there is a divinity that shapes them. 'Rest assured,' he will say, 'I would have been given the impetus and leisure had I been ordained for the work'; and will thus make us wroth with heaven instead of with himself. 'But bitterness has not warped his being. He goes forth to meet his destiny as a friend.'

And yet it must be remarked that no one has taken one's poetry more seriously than Bendre himself. Heaven denied him leisure at a time when he should have been unfolding 'the rose's hope while yet unblown'. But he has taken a magnificent revenge and loaded every rift of his verse with ore. Imaginative versions of whole stories and inventions are boiled down to a single simile or metaphor. One such occurs in the poem called *Chinta*. *Hoo* (flower) is a philological romance (of the world of sound and sense) recorded with the most unromantic but also unflinching brevity. When a poet who has thus cultivated the value of restraint allows his imagination to wander at will, the result is superb and can be seen in poems like 'The Butterfly' and 'Moonlight'. The poet seems to dip his pen in rainbow colours as he writes.

Again, though it is true that poetry is not a vocation, an exclusive groove of escape, with him as with others, it is also a fact that he has made every problem of his being turn round the centre of poetic creation. He has prepared and built up,—perhaps from many sources,—an aesthetic technique which he applies to every problem in the world. The sense of the

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soul's pilgrimage, which he always carries with him, is itself an object of æsthetic contemplation. All his philosophy is bound up in these terms. I am afraid that, when the time comes, he will claim God as his æsthetic object and not as the Almighty or as the Merciful. But he is also conscious of the fact that the four quarters of life—the subjective and the objective, the particular and the universal—will be merged into one indivisible Whole,—when the time comes!

His poetry is only a suggestive and half-revealing summary of his personality. But in another sense he is one of the most poetical of poets, since he extends my very conception of the poet and his task. For others poetry is a sport with Amaryllis, a holiday excursion, a laborious toil, a sacred obsession, an exclusive method of being in contact with the refinements of the spirit. But Mr. Bendre pitches other problems of life to the same key to which he tunes his poetry. All his responses to the world and to the ultimate Reality, his poetical gestures not excepted, are determined by the vision which is summed up in the last lines of *Moorti*, a long poem: ‘*Rasa* is *janana* or birth; *Virasa* or the absence of it is *marana* or death; and *samarasa* or perfect harmony alone is life.’

I once requested Bendre to define his attitude towards life. He answered at once that he meant to live. It seems that he had pondered over it long since, for in a playlet written in his early days occurs the sentence: ‘To be is the goal.’ This reply represents a peculiar type of temperament. To live is all; to dream, suffer, hope, storm the four stages of consciousness, ransack the universe for knowledge and experience, and so to live on till all be well and one,—is not that a royal ambition? The ‘spirit-life’ itself is turned into a ‘gay romance’ and song naturally has its share in it.

This is how Mr. Bendre composes poetry. Shall I also tell you how he publishes it? It is highly amusing. His *Karulina Vachanagalu*, the first of their type in Kannada, lay for eleven years in manuscript. *Gari*, the only representative collection of his poems, came out in 1932, fourteen years

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after he had been known as a poet. And then, too, it was his friends who prepared the press-copy and travelled with it to Bangalore ; and his fellow-workers paid the bill. But as many poems and more remain buried in his manuscript, waiting silently for their redemption. It is so cruel. But looking to the man whom they have chosen to be their spokesman, I think it is inevitable. .

It was in 1917, in the Karnatak Social Club, Poona, that he made his débüt as a poet. He gave a reading of the *Tuturi* (' trumpet ') to the audience. In the same year was composed *Kogile*, his first long poem.

A student of the Fergusson College, he graduated in 1918 and left for Dharwar. That was the year of the *Sahitya Sammelan* at Dharwar. And he was then introduced to a considerable gathering of literary men as a poet by Mr. V. B. Alur and his friends who had arranged for a reading of Mr. Bendre's poems. In 1918, too, was started *Prabhata*, a journal originally intended to publish all of his poems. But, for many reasons, only four poems of his figured in its pages. He became a member of the editorial board of the *Vagbhushana* in 1919 and turned out much significant work in that capacity. And it was in 1920, as a teacher in the Victoria High School, Dharwar, that he divined and commenced practising the idea which ripened, later on, into the *Geleyara Gumpu* and its activities.

The rest is easily told. Mr. Bendre also took an active part in the deliberations which were responsible for the inauguration of *Jaya Karnatak*, the premier monthly of the pre-ince. The *Swadharma* was taken up in 1926 and became, for nearly two years, the literary organ of Mr. Bendre and the *Gumpu*. The *Jaya Karnatak*, again, was taken up in 1929 and served, till May 1933, the aspirations both of Karnatak and of the *Gumpu*. Recited by himself and by his friends, Bendre's poems had already grown immensely popular. And his reading of *Hakki Harutide* at the Belgaum Literary Conference was in itself a thing of genius. Early in 1930, he was elected as the president of the Poets' Conference, Mysore.

MR. BENDRE AND HIS POETRY

And the recitative tour which he subsequently had with Masti Venkatesa Iyengar endeared him and his work to the people throughout the Mysore State.

The position can be summed up as follows : Mr. Bendre was the first to promote an intense study of ancient Kannada literature among the young men of North Karnatak both by precept and by practice. He was responsible for the celebration of many of the *utsavas* like the Santakavi and Vidyaranya anniversaries. It was he who made the young poets of Dharwar and elsewhere read out their poems to crowded gatherings at the time of the Mahanavami festival, even before the *Parishat* thought of making the *kavisammelan* its adjunct. He was the first of modern poets to turn the Kannada country and literature themselves into a theme for poetry. And it was in his poems like the *Tarnava Tapaswi* that the great national awakening of 1919 found its most satisfying expression. For these and many other reasons it is that Mr. Bendre's poetry has come to have the pre-eminence which we attribute to it today, apart, of course, from its intrinsic worth.

A clue to the nature of the poetical reputation which he enjoys can be obtained in the poem in which he has made 'fame' famous;—*keerti*. He broods over it till its real meaning grows luminous within him. In the first part he dwells on the chaotic course of history and develops a sort of historical pessimism. Certain works survive and certain others, far more precious, are lost and forgotten, apparently for no reason. The wheels of chance alone seem to determine the course of literary immortality. Musings similar to this introduce the poem. In the second part, the poet dwells on the psychological aspect of the problem. Immortal literary distinction is like the shadow that a cloud leaves on the waters. It is like the handful of dust bestowed on the dead by the living. It is not the 'bubble reputation' but the gift of quickened response and love that satisfies a thirsty soul. Joy and sorrow are of no account in themselves. It is the comradeship in weal or woe that is of real consequence. To feel

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the presence of a human heart is all that the soul needs for its sustenance.

The third part carries this trend of thought into the domain of mutuality, of insurgent and co-operative experience :

'It is in the joy of sympathetic living,—of the apprehension of others' weal and woe as one's own and *vice versa*—that the real scope of personal experience lies. This alone is life ; all else is vanity of vanities.'

'Even the music of the voice which accords with the symphony of the tambourine and blends with it in harmony, becomes an immortal song. This golden bliss alone is the crown and glory of life. The renown of a "name" is but fatal like the fall of a thunderbolt.'

'How can the harp of life feel satisfied if it smites on all its chords for its own listening, enwrapt in its own harmonics ? The soul attains freedom only when the Universal Soul is seen to permeate its utterance.'

'Vain is the joy which is not reproductive. And the continuity of the progeny of joy is immortal indeed. Oh ! Life ! Oh ! maiden with the dark hair starred by a cluster of blossoming smiles ! You and you alone are the queen of my faith !'

'Enough of the immortality of life piled on life. Dry and fruitless is the lure of "name and fame". Vain is the vicarious immortality of parenthood. Valhalla also and heaven are as nothing in my eyes. Let me live in the living and it is seven heavens and more.'

(To be continued)

The Æsthetics of Gujarat

By SRIMATHI MADRI DESAI

The rich cultural heritage of India can no longer be preserved by mere academic speeches, involved spiritualism and rhetoric. Similarly, the defects of the present educational system should not be merely debated. The time has come when some of the younger generation are definitely searching for cultural values in the social and civic life of ancient India. They have begun to look to the past for its specific guidance for the present. Scholarly achievements can be assured only by systematic studies of ancient literature and history, in Sanskrit and the vernaculars, and of objects of art.

I believe that the vernaculars of the different provinces of India have been, practically, left unnoticed for the guidance I am suggesting. The 'Rasa' literature in Brij, a book like 'Banglar Brita' by Dr. Abanindranath Tagore in Bengali, and the manuscripts in Tamil and Telugu have been frequently referred to. But they have not been, it seems, practically examined and applied. If this is done, and some well-thought co-ordination is accomplished, it would be easy to prove the continuity of art traditions in the different provinces, and to mark their distinctions as well as their unity. For the influence on the different provinces of aesthetic conceptions taken from Sanskrit is natural. The influence would be considered as their unifying factor. At the same time the vernaculars suggest, as they should, provincial distinctions.

Both these elements could be observed in the Gujarati poets. I select those of the two important periods in Gujarati literature, for example, of the fourteenth to nearly the seventeenth century, and from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Poets Bhelan and Nakar of the earlier centuries,

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poets Premanand and Virji of the eighteenth century, and poet Dayaram of the nineteenth have, all of them, revealed in their poems the aesthetic inclinations and tendencies of Gujarat. All these poets have emphasised the importance of art and artists and art-craftsmen. Their presence on all important occasions, ceremonies and festivals was indispensable. The conference of reputed artists and craftsmen was a common feature of popular assemblies. Poet Giridhar, for example, says : 'The king had called architects, carpenters, blacksmiths and painters from all corners of the world, to build his audience-hall, *Sabha mandap*.'

Poets Premanand, Virji, Nakar and poet Giridhar have referred to the architecture of the 'Mandap' in their verses. Poet Premanand says : 'There were hundreds of rooms arranged opposite each other, and between them there were long-covered passages together with big courtyards and doors opening on the streets.' Poet Nakar, is, it seems, inclined to note the decorations also. In describing the court festival, the poet narrates that the whole city was decorated with the jewelled 'toranas' (festoons) over the doors, green leaves and plantain stems for brackets and pillars. Poets Giridhar and Virji mention the construction of 'jalis' (niches), steps, brackets, pillars and roofs suggestive of old architecture. The important thing is to know that they have also spoken of their utility. For they say that the arrangement of 'jalis' and 'chhajas' exercises a cooling effect on the eye. Poet Giridhar mentions specifically the following varieties of 'mandap', namely, 'Raja mandap' 'Sabha mandap' and 'Ranga mandap'.

Poet Giridhar describes also mural paintings and decorative designs on the walls, ceiling, pillars and roofs. He says : 'On the walls and on the ceilings of the *mandap* were painted images of gods and goddesses and the ten incarnations, the portraits of all the ruling kings as well as the 'navagraha'—the planetary and solar system--like the corridor paintings at Ajanta. The roofs of the *mandap* were painted, he says, in some coloured floral and decorative figure designs. Further,

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the poet observes that the paintings on the niches, pillars and doors were as bright as real jewels.

Poet Giridhar has, it would appear, a more critical perception for art. He emphasises, moreover, the existence of art in the home. It would be out of place here to quote lengthy descriptions. But they are worth careful study. I shall cite some of them. In one of his descriptions of the art-crafts he says that Kamavati, a character in his poems, had embroidered in 'kasida' stitches one big rug or carpet in eighty-four patterns with eighty four varieties of colour. The design of its border was chiefly composed of creepers and flowers. Its medallion contained patterns of figures in different poses. For high craftsmanship the poet says that its charming colour combinations, various designs and neat and well arranged stitches of the carpet surprised the spectators. They mistook, he says, the carpet for a real painting.

It should be observed that these poets were preoccupied with colour. Poet Premanand, for instance, remarks that the pillars of the 'mandap' were covered with various richly coloured black, yellow and white cloth like, he adds, the 'saries' of the South. He also suggests the necessity for colour harmony in architecture. He speaks of the light green of the steps, the threshold and doors in red, white walls decorated with gold arabesque, and the decorative peacocks, blue and green, on the lintel of the doors.

On auspicious occasions and ceremonies like the marriage and thread ceremonies, and the anointing ceremony in the worship of Krishna, the poets describe the colours of dresses and 'saries' of women. They discuss the black 'kanchuki' with saffron tassels, red and green 'saries' with golden stripes, and saffron bodices. For the 'Holi' festival, generally, pinkish and yellowish 'saries' were used. 'Red chundadies' were particularly worn for 'subhsakun' as an auspicious token.

Similarly, the different kinds of ornaments were, poet Dayaram says, worn for different occasions. Generally, the poet says that rich jewelled bangles, jewelled earrings, nose-

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rings, and necklaces of diamonds were used by the rich women for marriage ceremonies. On the occasion of ordinary festivals they used to put on ornaments of gold. In describing the Krishna and Gopi dance he refers to ornaments like 'zanzer' (bells) on the feet, 'katimekhlā' (girdle) with tiny 'ghughries', 'vank', 'makut' and 'mal'. Further, these poets suggest that along with diamonds and rubies, other rich glass pieces in blue, green or saffron colours were set in the bangles or necklaces, as a variety and as a colour harmony for the gold.

From these extracts we can visualise the artistic environment of Gujarat, the environment which instinctively set the standard for the poems. The art crafts in the home, the high culture of women, their sense for colour, for the beauty of nature, sense of form, the legitimate place of art and artists in the houses alike of the rich and the poor, in the folk and court festivals, are all suggestive of a five-art environment. They lived the cultural life of India; they were in an environment directly alive with art. Art was neither a subject for academic dogmas, for intellectual display and ostentation, nor the distinctive monopoly of a class or caste.

The Evaluation of the Individual

By M. VENKATARANGAIYA, M.A.

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(1)

The problem of the evaluation of the individual is one of the most complicated and perplexing of the problems awaiting solution in the India of the present day. Its consideration is all the more necessary in view of the newer political and social conceptions that are now entering the field of public life in this country. Indian society has for long been a society of classes, castes, creeds and communities. During the past one century the whole of the social reform movement was directed to the discovery of the true value of the individual, irrespective of the caste, the community or creed to which he belonged. But there is unfortunately at present a reaction against this movement, a reaction in consequence of which the individual is again becoming completely and wholly identified with the so-called caste or community to which by accident he happens to belong. The political change through which the country is passing has given an increasing momentum to this tendency and it looks as if we are bringing into existence another stereotyped society against which the better type of mind has, since the days of Ram Mohan Roy, been carrying on a fearless and truceless war.

It may appear at the outset that there is nothing new in this reaction. It is only a continuation of the ancient tradition which has not lost its grip over us and which is now seeking to obtain an all-embracing hold. It is not merely the tradition of India but also of most other countries. But the tragedy of it lies in our thinking that we are fighting --and fighting successfully also-- against it while, as a matter of fact, we are

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really perpetuating it. This is the pity of the self-delusion into which the moderns are falling.

The problem at issue is: 'Is it safe to proceed to determine the value of the individual, his whole worth or his worth for any particular function or purpose, by reference to any one quality in him?' The classical idea was that it was not only safe but that it was also the only possible and desirable course. The division of people into castes as understood in our *Smritis* proceeded on this basis. It does not matter very much whether birth (*janma*) or profession (*karma*) formed the basis of this division. The implication was that if one knew the caste to which an individual belonged one could know the whole of that individual's worth for any and every purpose in life, public or private. Nothing else needed to be considered in this connection. Assuming for a moment that birth was the criterion of caste, it may be said that it was regarded as consequently providing a criterion for judging the individual's inherent abilities, his talents, his tastes and aptitudes, the kind of training he ought to receive, the vocation he should pursue, the persons with whom he should have social intercourse, and the place he was to occupy as a citizen in the body politic. There was only one standard of value for judging everything about the individual. Even if it is assumed that it was not birth but profession that formed the basis of caste, the result from the standpoint under consideration was not different. It meant that everything about the individual could be determined by reference to only one aspect in his life, namely, his vocation or profession. Broadly speaking, within the fold of the ancient Indian society the question of religious creed or belief was not of much significance in this connection, as all followed more or less the same faith. The only deciding consideration was caste.

This was not perhaps the peculiarity of India alone. It was the case with the ancient Greeks, the Romans and the peoples of medieval Europe. Birth as a member of the Eupatridae or the Patriciate or the feudal nobility decided in

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the case of each individual his total worth—what occupation he should follow, whom he should marry, what relations he should have with others and what political rights and obligations he should have.

The classical idea may therefore be regarded as a totalitarian and a monistic idea. It derived all characteristics belonging to an individual from one principle or one feature in him. If in that one respect he showed a defect it was inferred that he had an all-round defect ; and if in that he showed a merit it was similarly inferred that he had an all-round merit.

Islam brought along with it into India a new creed but not a new principle for judging the value of the individual. In place of birth it substituted creed as the standard of life. He who prayed with his face turned towards Mecca was for *all* purposes a more valuable individual than he who turned towards the east and offered his prayers to the Sun-God. Its idea was that there is only one true faith and that man becomes entirely and completely changed if he adopts it. He then becomes fit for ruling kingdoms, for commanding armies, for acquiring and managing landed property, for carrying on trade and for doing every other sort of work. Instead of saying, ‘Know ye a man’s birth, and you will know everything else about him’, it said, ‘Know thou a man’s creed and you will know everything else about him ; nothing else matters.’ One principle is as tyrannical as the other. For no creed has a monopoly of spiritual truth ; in every creed there are numberless superstitions ; and no creed is capable of completely transforming a man and making a saint out of a sinner. Are there not rogues, criminals, plunderers, debased men and women among the followers of every creed ? Does any creed profess to dispense with the need for a penal code even in respect of its own followers ? What is true of Islam is equally true of every other proselytizing religion—for instance, Christianity—especially when persecution is an article of faith. It is because of this that all those who value man as man regard the introduction of religious

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tolerance as one of the greatest landmarks in the march of human progress. It is a step in recognising that the value of an individual for all purposes is not to be based on only one feature of his life, however dignified be the name you give to it. 90.5%.

It may be argued by some whether the substitution of creed for birth as the criterion is not in itself a great achievement. There is not much to be said in favour of this view from our present standpoint. In a sense it is as easy to defend birth as a criterion of value as creed, if one looks at either from a transcendental standpoint. For, when in ancient India man was judged according to his birth, it carried a certain number of implications along with it. In its ideal form it gave facilities for a particular sort of bringing up, education, training, a standard of life, outlook and so on : so that an individual belonging to any caste was in a sense a member of it not merely in virtue of his birth in it but equally in virtue of his being brought up in a particular manner, with a view to enable him to discharge his duties and responsibilities towards the larger community of which his caste was a part. Birth meant not a mere label which a man put on himself but the prospect of a particular kind of growth and its fulfilment. If caste is to be judged it must be judged in this spirit. It stood not merely for superiority due to birth but for superiority resulting from particular kinds of growth accompanying birth. Caste degenerated when the latter principle was ignored.

There is not much more to be said in favour of creed. If creed is merely the putting of one label in place of an existing one, it does not by itself—any more than caste or birth—form a better standard for judging the individual's worth. It is only the assumption that there is a true conversion,—and not the sprinkling of the baptismal waters—that there is a scrupulous training in the articles of faith and a strict adherence to the rules of conduct, imposed by the faith,—it is only these assumptions that constitute the basis of the doctrine that the value of the

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individual is to be determined solely by reference to his creed. But in the large majority of cases these assumptions have no real foundation. Otherwise there would have reigned perfect peace on earth and goodwill among men. For there is no creed which does not advocate peace and goodwill. The truth, however, is that the implications entertained when one is said to follow a particular creed are of the same transcendental category as those associated with training and bringing up in the case of caste. In most cases the creed is as much a name as caste, and it is not consequently a more perfect standard for the evaluation of the individual.

It is not, however, the object of this paper to discuss the relative merits of caste and creed as criteria of value. The object is to lay bare the absurdity of applying a single standard for discovering the real worth or 'worths' of the individual. In this respect the new forms of social and political organisation now obtaining dominance in many of the countries and labelled as Fascism and Communism are to be regarded as thoroughly reactionary and as taking us back to barbarism. Under Communism as taught and practised in Russia, the worth of an individual for *all* purposes is judged solely by his capacity and willingness to do manual work. Manual labour is the one standard of all values. Other kinds of work or attainments have no meaning or significance. Even though it may be plausibly argued that this is a natural outcome of the pre-Communistic age, when idleness under the high-sounding name of leisure was the standard of value, it only explains the origin of the Communistic view and is irrelevant in estimating the truth in Communism. In Italy it is the membership of a corporation of employers or employees to which admission is strictly restricted, that has become the basis of value. If one is qualified to be a member of a corporation he is qualified to be a citizen, to enjoy political privileges, to exercise freedom of thought and expression, and do anything and everything else.

In those countries like England where Capitalism still

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rules, the situation is not very much different. There it is property which constitutes the basis of value. Property is identified with industry (which is one of the constituent elements in value) even though there are many idle rich ; it is identified with intelligence and capacity (which are some of the other constituent elements in value), though many propertied people are dullards and many among the poor are extraordinarily intelligent. It is regarded as a satisfactory standard for measuring the ability of a person to become a legislator, a diplomat, or a cabinet minister. ‘ Know a man’s property, and you can know everything else about him.’

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When we speak of the worth of the individual it is always ‘worth’ with reference to a particular situation. There is nothing like general worth. It is therefore fallacious to judge the individual’s capacity to do a particular kind of work, or for occupying a particular position in society or the State or the economic order, by his capacity for doing some other kind of work or by reason of some one characteristic of his. The sort of intelligence, ability and talents required for work in one field is different from the sort of intelligence etc., required for work in another field. The competency, *i.e.*, the worth of an individual is never a general worth but is a totality—even a mechanical totality—made up of particular worths. No one is good in general ; no one has value for all things. A successful general is not necessarily a successful statesman ; and if he is successful as a statesman also, it is not the result of his being successful as a general. A great captain of industry need not necessarily be an equally capable administrator of a University. A scientist and an inventor need not necessarily be an efficient man of business. For each one of these functions a particular kind of worth is required. It is true that an individual may possess abilities of different kinds—and it is the theme of this paper that we must recognise this truth--and it is not right to conclude that one who is a success in one field cannot be a success in another,

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or one who is a failure in one field will be equally a failure in every other field. Unfortunately, however, man is a lazy and ease-loving creature. He is also proud and intensely vain. The result is that, unwilling as he is to take trouble to think, he mistakes ability in one sphere for equal ability in other spheres. Those who enjoy the privilege of choosing people for various stations in life are too lazy to discriminate between reputation obtained in one sphere of life and fitness of the same individual for occupying another station. We have, therefore, many square men in round holes and *vice versa*. Similarly those who have obtained reputation in one sphere are so vain that they think that they have a right to occupy prominent places elsewhere and that they are competent for it.

All this is the result of our failure to analyse the total worth of the individual into its constituents—negative as well as positive. This in its turn is due to our continuing to adhere to the worn-out totalitarian principle according to which one feature of man is taken as the only feature worth consideration, whatever be the angle from which the individual is looked at and examined.

The revolt against caste and class differences which has been going on in our country in recent years is a protest against this totalitarian view. Reformers did not say that an individual was uninfluenced by the caste or class to which he belonged; but they stated that no individual derives all his characteristics from his class or caste. He has in him elements of worth—capacity to feel, to understand, to act, to organise—*independently of, and irrespective of, his class*. A man's fitness to receive education, for instance, should not be judged by the caste in which he happens to be born. Those who are born in the so-called 'lower castes' have as much innate intelligence and capacity to profit by education as those in the higher castes. You should not judge the capacity of a man to enjoy the ordinary amenities of life—access to sources of water-supply, to markets, to courthouses, to places of amusement, to festivals, etc.,—by the

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caste to which he belongs. Similar ought to be the attitude to be adopted as regards the other capacities of the individual.

This was truly a national awakening. But it was, alas! too short. For in its wake there has come a reaction which is producing effects that are bound to prove fatal. Once more the attempt is being made—and the attempt is considered most laudable by those that have the power to shape our fortunes—to judge the individual by reference to one particular aspect of his life. What is now known as ‘communalism’ is only another name for it. It is an application of a false standard of value. It is trying to stereotype a new kind of rigid system in place of the old which we thought was crumbling to pieces.

I am to be a citizen and as such I have to bear my portion of civic duties and share my portion of civic privileges. My weight as a citizen ought not to be artificially determined by a standard alien to the civic sphere. The test to be applied to discover the extent to which I deserve to be recognised as a citizen ought to have nothing to do with the religious community to which I belong. Because I look to Benares and not to Mecca, I ought not to be made to cast my political lot in a constituency the members of which share nothing in common with me. I must have the privilege to obtain my political salvation in the company of individuals—be they Muslims, Christians, Brahmins or non-Brahmins who share my political views. It is, however, considerations of community and creed that are now dominating the whole outlook on life in our country, depressing the individual in everything that he has to do.

This is all the more regrettable at a time when caste and community have ceased to be of any significance in themselves. Caste has ceased to have any meaning. It is now only a name. It does not stand for any particular tenets or mode of life or outlook. And after all, the individual is not responsible for his caste and in most cases for the religious community to which he belongs. While saying that birth or religion should not stand in the way of individual progress, we are as a matter

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of fact making it stand in the way of that progress by still trying to find out to what caste or religion a man belongs before determining the position which he deserves to occupy in our political, social and economic system. It is the result of the misconception that the value of man is exhausted by one aspect alone of his life.

The individual is a plurality of worths and values. He has worth as a householder, as a bread-winner, as the follower of a creed, as a citizen, as an artist, as a philosopher, as a scientist, as a club-goer, as a dice-player, etc., etc. Even a whole catalogue of all the capacities in which he has worth does not exhaust the elements of individuality in him. There is something over and above all these, something which cannot be measured or discovered by any objective standard. When the individual is so complex, deriving each element in his complexity from a large variety and multiplicity of sources—heredity, environment, associations, education, etc.,—why set up the view that you can deduce everything about him by looking at only one of these elements, and that perhaps the least significant? Clarity of thought is what is most required at the present day and it is the duty of the true philosopher to climb down to the world of facts and realities and be of help in bringing light and hope to the individual who, after all, is the ultimate unit in all life.

Usha

(A Play)

By MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR, M.A.

(Translated from KANNADA by K. Sampatgiri Rao, M.A.)

Characters:

SRI KRISHNA

ANIRUDDHA :—Sri Krishna's Grandson.

NARADA

RUKMINI, SATYABHAMA AND OTHERS :—Sri Krishna's Queens and their companions.

BANASURA

USHA :—Banasura's daughter

CHITRALEKHA }
LEELAVATI } Usha's maids in attendance.

MAYURA :—The bridegroom proposed by Banasura for his daughter.

MALINI :—Usha's attendant.

Servants, guards etc.

SCENE :—A Portion of Bana's Palace.

(Enter Narada)

NARADA :—O Lord who on thy breast
Still dost wear the sign
Of mercy and of love
Unending and benign ;
Whose all abundant kindness
Never yet can tire
In yielding to thy servants
All their heart's desire ;
O thou whose holy presence
Gods and their kings adore,
Who art both life and thought

USHA

In all the worlds and more ;
O my lord God appear
In the minds of all
That lives and moves, as doth
The moon on heaven's wall ;
And on our thirsty souls,
In this life's dubious night,
Of your eternal bliss
Shed the immortal light ;
And fill our lives with joy
To conquer suffering,
In token of your love
And mercy, God, our king.

(Enter Bana--Mayura is with him)

BANA :—How do you do, Narada ?

NARADA :—How do you do, Baneswara ? You seem to be upset. What is the matter ?

BANA :—My daughter Usha defies me. I brought her up like a pet parrot and this is how she returns my tenderness.

NARADA :—What did you ask her to do ?

BANA :—I asked her to marry Mayura and she refuses.

NARADA :—Well, if she doesn't like it, why compel her, Baneswara ? Show her portraits of young men of noble birth, and let her marry whom she will.

BANA :—I do not wish to do that. Who knows whom she will choose ?

NARADA :—There is one way in which you can avoid that risk. But you will not agree to it.

BANA :—Let us hear it.

NARADA :—There is Sri Krishna's grandson, Aniruddha. Do you know what a handsome youth he is ?

BANA :—Why, don't you know ? Krishna sent word to me asking that Usha be given to Aniruddha. I replied that it was altogether out of the question.

NARADA :—Baneswara, your grandfather¹ was such a devotee of Vishnu and yet you treat Krishna as an enemy. I do not know what to make of this.

¹ Prahlada.

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BANA :—Well, if you please, Narada, I am also a devotee of Vishnu, but not of Krishna. The fellow is too arrogant.

NARADA :—Have we not all agreed that he is Vishnu in human form?

BANA :—Your saying so will not make him so.

NARADA :—What would you have? He has the conch of Vishnu. He has the discus of Vishnu. And he has such wonderful power. . . .

BANA :—No more, Narada. Every one has a conch and every one blows on it. I too have a discus. Without my leave not a living thing can enter the precincts of this city. You speak of Krishna's wonderful power. Is he the only one who has it? For his two arms I can at need assume a thousand. If he is Vishnu, so am I.

NARADA :—As you please then. But Krishna will surely take your daughter in marriage to Aniruddha.

BANA :—I shall immediately marry away Usha. What will he do then? Well, I must be going. Good-bye.

NARADA :—Good-bye. I shall look up the others and go too. (Exit Bana and Mayura).

This fellow is hopelessly obstinate. Krishna wishes to win him over. I too have often reminded him of Prahlada and have besought his grace towards Bana and he has said 'all in good time'. When is this 'good time'? When will Bana's good fortune bear fruit? Aniruddha has seen all the fairest girls in the land and wants to marry only Usha. Baneswara's discus is no bar to him as he can travel in the world of dreams, but if he manifests himself he will be made captive here. (Looks at the back of the stage). Here is Chitralekha. (Addressing her) Good day, Chitralekha. How is every one?

CHITRALEKHA :—By your blessings, all are well.

NARADA :—Are you going to Usha? Baneswara was here just now, very angry with her about something.

CHITRALEKHA :—He is trying to get her to marry Mayura. She does not agree. Every day there is a wrangle over it. There must have been one today.

USHA

NARADA :—I said something to Baneswara about this. But he would not listen. Come, tell me everything. Why is Usha unwilling to marry Mayura ?

CHITRALEKHA :—There seems to be some reason, but she will not tell. For the last four months. . . .

(Narada and Chitralekha go out talking)

(Curtain rises : Usha's apartment—Usha is sitting holding a Veena)

USHA :—(Speaking to herself) O my love who came and married me in my dream : be always real to me ! May my heart never doubt your reality ! When need arises I shall call on you. Come then as you have promised. This is all my prayer. My Lord, my Love (joining her hands in salutation) no more of hesitation. (Taking her Veena and playing a tune) I shall sing a cheerful tune (she sings).

Come, O beloved of my heart,
My love, my soul's delight,

Alas for my cheerfulness ! Well, I shall sing this same song.

Come O beloved of my heart,
My love, my soul's delight.

Like a lone dove on a rock,
Beside a stream whose waters run
Thin and straggling as to mock
A better time, this heart you won
Cries again and yet again
For thee : wilt let it cry in vain ?

Lo, yon tree beside the rill,
Whose branches by their flowers' weight
Have bent adown and down until
They touch the water : and the flight
Of bees that of the flowers' juice
Take what they will and as they choose.

My being's deep cries out for thee ;
For love of thee my soul is bent ;

TRIVENI

Thou whose love is as the sea
Deep and spacious, wilt relent
And come to me and save me yet ;
Wilt come and save and not forget.

(Chitralekha from outside)

CHITRALEKHA :—Usha ! (after a moment) Usha ! Are you in ?

USHA :—Yes, come in, Chitra.

(Enter Chitralekha)

CHITRALEKHA :—Why are you so sad ? What has your father said ?

USHA :—I must agree tomorrow to marry Mayura. If I do not agree, I shall suffer cruel punishment.

CHITRALEKHA :—You are an only child and motherless. You must be either married or punished. And why are you so obstinate ?

USHA :—Do you also ask ? If you don't understand, who will ? Did not Mayura wish to marry you ? And did you agree ?

CHITRALEKHA :—No, but that was because the king has always intended that he should marry you.

USHA :—Was that the reason ? Was it not because you do not like him ?

CHITRALEKHA :—(Laughing) No. If I must speak the truth, it was because I am already married ! What will you do tomorrow ?

(Enter Leelavati. She tugs at Chitra and teases her)

LEELA :—Would you escape me ? Now I have caught you.

CHITRALEKHA :—Sh—Enough of this play.

USHA :—What is this, Leela ?

LEELA :—Chitra was drawing something in the garden. I went there and wished to see what she was drawing. She avoided me and ran here.

USHA :—(Wearily) Chitra ! Time passes heavily with me. Sit here and continue that drawing and I shall watch you.

CHITRALEKHA :—For some days now, I have had no skill in drawing.

USHA

USHA :—That was because you were alone. Sit down here with me and finish what you were drawing in the garden.

LEELA :—She hid the drawing when she saw me.

CHITRALEKHA :—Stop this chattering, silly.

USHA :—Don't mind her, Chitra. Well if you will not draw, sing something; I shall listen. Sit down. (Placing the Veena before Chitralekha). You sing a song. Leela will sing one after you.

CHITRALEKHA :—What song shall I sing?

USHA :—Sing one of your own songs.

CHITRALEKHA :—Very well (sings).

Like a parrot in a cage
My soul within this body dwells,
And in dejection thinks and longs
For freedom in the woods and dells
Which once it knew of paradise,
And fears it longs for them in vain :
When, O my dream, you come to me
In mercy and unloose the chain
That holds me captive, and O joy,
Hand in hand thou leadest me
From wood to wood in Paradise.
God's trusted messenger who comes
To free me when sleep seals my eyes,
O dream, my dream.

The child in cradle lies asleep ;
The mother in the flush of love
And happy smiles, beside him stands :
And joyous face bends from above :
And with fingers soft as flowers,
And with softer lips, caresses.
The love light of her eyes enwraps
The little life beneath and blesses.
E'en so you come to me, my dream :
In slumber deep you come to me
And take me in your arms and kiss.
And warm my heart and give my soul
A foretaste here of heavenly bliss.
Come dream, my dream.

TRIVENI

For thou art truth greater than any
Truth that man has thought or seen ;
The knowledge that I get from thee
No school or system that has been
Or that may be can know or teach ;
Of all the lives that I have lived
Thou art fruit and, dream, thou art
The crown of all I ever believed.
Still be with me, O my dream,
God's messenger to lead my soul
Through life's deep mazes unafraid
Unto my haven and my goal,
His holy feet, O dream.

(By this time Usha sighs, shows signs of fatigue. Leelavati secretly takes a picture from Chitralekha's lap without Chitralekha noticing it.)

CHITRALEKHA : - (Showing concern for Usha's fatigue) Why Usha ? What ails you ? Tell me, love, what is it ?

USHA :—As I heard your song, Chitra, some thought came to me and upset me. I feel quite well now. Chitra, how beautifully you sing !

CHITRALEKHA :—I may sing beautifully, but what good is it if it upsets you ?

LEELA :—O, but that is what happens when some people sing.

USHA :—Leela, now you sing a song.

LEELA :—If even Chitra's song upset you, what may not happen if I sing ?

CHITRALEKHA :—Sing the song about 'Jasmine and Champaka,' Leela. It is beautiful. Narada taught that song to Leela, Usha. It is a song from Dwaraka and your father does not like it. But it is very beautiful.

USHA :—Do sing it, Leela.

LEELA :—What if your father hears ? I shall sing another song written by Chitra.

(Sings a song)

O glowing eastern sky,
Had our lover come last night

USHA

O beauteous eastern sky?
The joy upon your face I see
Of love fulfilled, the ecstasy,
O glowing eastern sky;
This joyousness so bright and clear
It seems to say 'He was here'
O beauteous eastern sky;
Had our lover come o'ernight
O glowing eastern sky?

O Jasmine bloom,
Had our lover come last night
O jasmine bloom?
Last evening you were close and quiet
But now of happiness what riot
O jasmine bloom:
Your joyous sweetness fills all space . . .
And 'He was here' methinks it says
O jasmine bloom:
Had our lover come last night
O jasmine bloom?

O lover mine,
Why comest thou not to me
My lover mine?
Night after night with door ajar
I watch for thee to come, 'tis far
Into the night, my love:
You go and meet the eastern sky,
To bud relent but not to me,
My lover mine:
Will you never come to me
My lover mine?

USHA :—Chitra—you sang of a dream—some dream.
Now what kind of dream is it?

CHITRALEKHA :—Mine is a dream like any one else's.

USHA :—What did you see in the dream?

CHITRALEKHA :—What does one see in a dream but a dream?

USHA :—If one sees such a dream what should one care for reality?

TRIVENI

LEELA :—(With the drawing she has taken from Chitra in her hand) I have got hold of something interesting. Who wants it?

USHA :—What is it?

LEELA :—You should agree to give it to me; then I shall show it.

CHITRALEKHA :—(Feeling in her lap) Alas, I am undone! —Thief! You steal whatever you can lay hands on? Give it back.

LEELA :—Tell me whose picture it is and I shall give it.

CHITRALEKHA :—It is your lover's.

LEELA :—Why should *you* draw *my* lover's picture? It must be *your* lover's.

CHITRALEKHA :—Very well, so it is. Give it to me.

USHA :—Let me see, what picture is it?

LEELA :—See. (Shows it).

USHA :—Oh! (Swoons).

CHITRALEKHA :—Oh! What have you done, Leela? Go and bring Malini. Run. (Leelavati goes. Chitrakha fans Usha). How is this? (whispers) She seems to be with child!

USHA : (Recovering) Chitra—who is it?

CHITRALEKHA :—Whoever it is, why should it make you swoon?

USHA :—I shall tell you presently. Tell me first whose picture it is.

CHITRALEKHA :—It is the picture of some one whom I saw in my dream.

USHA :—Saw him in your dream? Do you see him now?

CHITRALEKHA :—No. If I saw him why should I draw his picture? He showed himself once and disappeared. I have drawn his picture, to fix him in my mind.

USHA :—Can he be real whom one sees in a dream?

CHITRALEKHA :—Whatever we see is real. The person was real to me that day. I am seeking to make him real today.

USHA :—Who is he?

CHITRALEKHA :—My love who came to me and then

USHA

deserted me. I know no more. But why were you so shocked?

USHA :—Chitra, I have fear lest you know my secret. Well, if you know, what is the harm? In whom shall I confide, if not in you? But is it possible that a man who appears in one person's dream can appear in the dream of another also?

CHITRALEKHA :—Did this man appear in your dream also?

USHA :—Listen, Chitra. Now four months ago, he appeared one night in my dream. I gave him my heart. I woke up and was grieved that I had become awake. I wondered what merit I had done to enjoy the good fortune of having that dream. He appeared the next night. Do you remember you asked me one day why I was so cheerful? That was the second day of his appearance. Hoping that he would come again I went to bed early on the third day. He came, Chitra, and in dream we were wedded in the *Gandharva* way. Sometimes I think it was mere dream. But then it is not unreal. His words and behaviour have been so clearly impressed on me that I cannot dismiss it as mere fancy.

CHITRALEKHA :—The speech and action of a dream are always clearly impressed. That is the way of our mind.

USHA :—What if he sang verse, Chitra? I am not a writer of verse.

CHITRALEKHA :—What verse did he sing?

USHA : I feel so shy to repeat what he said. But I don't mind telling you. He sang about me :

My being longed and ached
To see your pure bright face,
As might the child to see
The moon in brightest phase;

And like a bee awing
To meet its flower-love,
I have flown from far
To be beside thee now.

These were his words. I never had a thought of composing verses about myself and singing them.

TRIVENI

CHITRALEKHA :—Of what country is he prince ?

USHA :—He did not tell me. He has not appeared during the last fifteen days. If I wish, he will come. But it seems, in my life-time I can so call on him only thrice. So I do not wish to do it unless there is need. And now, Chitra, what shall I do if father asks me to marry Mayura ? I should say I am married but he will be angrier still.

CHITRALEKHA :—Usha, now you yourself tell me what I hesitated to ask. Leave alone your father's being angry if you tell him you are married. In the first place he will not believe it. But do you know your present condition ? The good name of the Royal House is at stake.

USHA :—Fear not, Chitra. I am sure I am married, and if need arises I shall show my lover to my father. He has agreed to show himself if I desire it. But he says that my calling on him thus bodes ill to my people. He says also that then his power to move about in the dream world will be lost to him. Why should I be the cause of taking away from him the divine power that he now enjoys ? It is enough for me that he has accepted my love.

CHITRALEKHA :—He has not told you who he is.

USHA :—I asked him but he only said that he was related to persons whom my father disliked, and that I should know everything in good time.

CHITRALEKHA :—Usha, rare is your fortune. You see, I saw him just one night and yet I felt that vision was the fulfilment of my life. I can draw his likeness in a picture. I draw it and consider myself most blessed. And so I am. And you, my dear, you own him. He comes when you call. He takes form when you wish. Great is your good fortune. Believe me, there can be nothing greater. I saw him once in my dream and do not desire any other thing. How can you marry Mayura after having owned him ?

LEELA :—(Entering) The king is coming.

CHITRALEKHA :—The king ! Why did you call the king ?

LEELA :—I called Malini and was returning. The king met me on the way and asked me where I had gone. I

USHA

told him. Mayura also was there. Both of them are coming. (Mayura and Banasura enter. Malini comes behind. Usha and Chitra stand up. The Veena and the picture are left on the floor in confusion).

BANA :—What is this that Leela tells me? What picture was it and why did you swoon?

MAYURA :—(Picking up the picture and holding it up) This must be the picture.

BANA :—(Looking at it) Is this the one? (No one speaks) Why are you silent? (To Leela) Look here, you girl, come here. Is this the picture?

(Leelavati looks at Usha)

Usha :—Yes.

BANA :—Whose picture is it? Speak. (Usha is silent.) (To Chitra) You who drew it, tell me who it is.

CHITRALEKHA :—I do not know.

BANA :—(Turning to Usha) Who is he?

Usha :—He is my lover, but who he is I do not know.

BANA—How fine! my house has come to a pretty pass. (To Chitralekha) You drew a picture without knowing who it is? You are a proper companion to this witless girl who loves him without knowing who he is. Usha, hear my last offer to you. Marry Mayura and live. Refuse and . . .

Usha :—I have married my lover. I cannot marry Mayura.

BANA :—You married? Without my leave? Who then is this man?

Usha :—I shall call him and let you know who he is.

BANA :—How can he come here without my leave?

Usha :—He can. He comes as a dream and becomes real.

BANA :—O wretch—what falsehood you can utter! Are you indeed my daughter—or was your mother faithless?—You deserve to be killed for your wantonness.

(Unsheathes the sword)

MALINI :—Alas! How can you raise your hand against your daughter? And do you not see she is with child?

TRIVENI

(She comes between Banasura and Usha. Mayura grasps the hand of Banasura).

BANA :—With child ! Has she brought that disgrace on my house ? Alas ! That I begot such a vile creature ! Wretch ! Renegade !

USHA :—I have done nothing to be ashamed of.

BANA :—Then show me this husband of yours.

USHA :—I can show him. But first give me word that you will do no harm to him.

BANA :—Do no harm to him ! For what he has done to me, I will kill him.

USHA :—If you must kill, kill me. I shall not call him, just to be killed by you.

BANA :—Have you got him here concealed ?

USHA :—No. He will come when wanted.

BANA :—This is nonsense. It will be well if you produce him immediately. Otherwise, despair of life.

CHITRALEKHA :—Usha—what sittter occasion can there be? Call for him.

BANA :—You are in the know of this. It is you who have spoilt her. You should be punished first. (Goes to strike Chitralekha)

USHA :—Alas ! What shall I do ? (Coming between Banasura and Chitralekha)—O Lord ! appear, show yourself. I cannot bear to see Chitra come to harm. (After a moment of silence Aniruddha appears between Bana and Usha. Usha is about to fall in a swoon. Aniruddha holds her).

ANIRUDDHA :—Salutations, O King ! Is it heroic to hurt women ?

BANA :—Who are you, vile fellow ?

ANIRUDDHA :—I am Aniruddha, grandson of Sri Krishna.

BANA :—You are a thief and are worthy grandson to a thief. But why did you step into this den of lions and get caught ? Do you think you will escape, fool ? I shall end your life.

ANIRUDDHA :—Do so. But first let us wake up your

USHA

daughter from her swoon. (Makes Usha wake and take a seat and fans her.)

BANA :—This is good; very good. Mayura, keep this rascal here. I shall send servants. Bind his hands with chains and make him prisoner.

MAYURA :—But you must not take his life. It is my business to fight with him and kill him. (To himself) What, is he really more handsome than I? (Looking at his face in the mirror)

(Exit Bana)

USHA :—(To Aniruddha) My Lord—So you are still here? And it is true that you have come? I feared it was only a dream as usual.

ANIRUDDHA :—Dream and reality are alike real to you. Are you better?

USHA :—Yes. Where is father? I hope he did not hurt you.

ANIRUDDHA :—No, nor will. (Guards come and stand at the doors).

USHA :—What is this?

GUARDS :—The king has ordered that no one should be allowed to leave this place, madam.

USHA :—What shall we do now?

ANIRUDDHA :—Nothing. The king merely desires that we should not be separated.

USHA :—What about Chitalekha?

ANIRUDDHA :—I have asked of my grandfather that none here should suffer.

USHA :—O, I am so happy. My Lord, this is Chitalekha. (Chitalekha stands to one side bashfully). Why! you know her already!

ANIRUDDHA :—How do you know?

USHA :—It is by looking at the picture drawn by Chitra that I fainted. Leela, what an innocent babe you are? Why did you tell the king of the picture?

LEELA :—He asked me why you fainted. How should I know it was the picture of brother-in-law? I said ‘picture’

TRIVENI

and then hesitated. But he would not leave me. Then I thought it wouldn't matter and told him.

ANIRUDDHA :—Had Chitra drawn my picture ?

CHITRALEKHA :—(Aside) Why are they saying all this ? How is this ? He is not so fair as he appeared in the dream. (Goes apart and stands looking through the window).

USHA : - Yes. That is how I knew you had seen her. Their songs and that picture made me feel that they knew my secret and wanted to test me. Anyhow, Leela has caused a great ado today.

LEELA :—Ado indeed ! It was I who had married ; it was I who drew the picture ; and it was I who fainted. All this was myself. Being such a clever girl, Usha, why did you not tell us that it was brother-in-law's picture before you fainted ? See, I have been responsible to get him here and I deserve a good word. But what do I get instead ? A great ado ? I shall never make a mistake again. . The next time I see a picture, I shall conclude it is Chitralekha's lover and all will be well.

ANIRUDDHA :—And the next picture after that will be your lover.

LEELA :—Girls who write poems and paint pictures may be satisfied with lovers in pictures. But I and girls like me need real ones.

CHITRALEKHA :—How talkative you are, Leela. Behave yourself before strangers.

LEELA :—Who is a stranger, Chitra, and what is it I have done ? You ought to show our brother the courtesies due from a sister-in law. But you are standing speechless like a doll. Shall not I at least offer these civilities to our sister's husband ? Come in, brother, and sit in more comfort. (Moves towards the inner room taking hold of Usha's hand).

ANIRUDDHA :—Yes, I am coming. My grandfather should know of what has occurred. You, sisters, go in. I shall offer a prayer and join you presently.

USHA

(Chitralekha, Usha and Leelavati go in. Aniruddha offers a prayer)

O Grandsire, listen to my prayer.

It is your vow to save those who belong to you and call on you for help.

I your grandson, and this my beloved wife,
We need you, sire. Pray come and help.
You are everywhere and see everything ;
You melt the hardest heart and bend those who are mighty.
Make my beloved's father forgive what she has done ;
And for Prahlada's sake give good to this family.
Forgive the trouble I have caused in my ignorance,
And save me and her who is mine.

(He goes in)

(Curtain drops)

(Servants enter from either side)

FIRST SERVANT :—Hi, here : Is the guard all right ? The king wished it to be looked to.

SECOND SERVANT :—Is no one to be sent to relieve the guard ? We have been here four days.

FIRST SERVANT :—That day as soon as the king went out, the guards of the city gate came and said that Krishna's discus had come before the city and that it was difficult to keep it off. We had to take out our king's discus and keep it before the other. As we learnt that Krishna was soon coming himself, we made ready for battle. And amidst this bustle, we forgot all about you.

SECOND SERVANT :—Has Krishna come ?

FIRST SERVANT :—He came this morning with a small army. Our people fought but were beaten. Baneswara and Krishna have stood up to fight each other.

SECOND SERVANT :—Who is winning ?

FIRST SERVANT :—Baneswara has taken on his thousand arms. Who is then to oppose him ? Krishna does not however care for that. His discus alone can conquer the three worlds. The result has to be seen.

TRIVENI

SECOND SERVANT :—If somebody relieves me, I could go and see the fight.

FIRST SERVANT :—Well, I shall send some one.

(The two go in different directions)

(The curtain rises. The front of Usha's residence. Usha and Chitradekha are seen.)

USHA :—Chitra, what is the news?

CHITRALEKHA :—It seems that Sri Krishna and your father are fighting. The result has to be seen.

USHA :—I cannot wish complete victory to either. Lord Krishna has to forgive the faults of my father and save him. If father would use some patience all would be well.

CHITRALEKHA :—Wish good to both.

• • •
(Servant enters.)

SERVANT :—Good madam. Krishna won. It seems the king's discus was broken and Krishna cut off all his arms. The Yadavas are entering the city.

USHA :—Alas! What shall we do now? I shall send my husband to beg of Sri Krishna to spare the life of my father. (Goes inside. Bustle outside. Sri Krishna, Banasura, Narada and others enter.)

SRI KRISHNA :—Baneswara, though you have always treated me as an enemy, I have nothing but love to you. You are very dear to me, descendant of Prahlada. You too in your heart must have only love for me, but in loyalty to your race you have had to be unfriendly. Now that my grandson loves your daughter we have a new reason for friendship. Narada was the first to tell Aniruddha about Usha. The first night the boy saw some one else and came away, but the next night he saw Usha. When he said he would marry her I gladly agreed. If you now approve, we shall solemnise formally the marriage that the young couple have already concluded.

BANESWARA :—As you please.

SRI KRISHNA :—I know it is not out of mere courtesy you

USHA

say this. Come, let us go. We have to be very grateful to Narada Maharshi for this our friendship.

NARADA :—Krishna, I am afraid of your gratitude. You cut off the arms of the bride's father on the day of the marriage. What may gratefulness from such a person mean to the man who only brought about the marriage?

SRI KRISHNA :—You know what it may mean? (Seeing Chitra) —Who is this young lady?

BANA :—It is Chitralekha, my daughter's companion.

NARADA :—And your devotee, Krishna. Chitra, come and make salutations to our Lord.

CHITRALEKHA :—Salutations to the revered one. (Bends low in reverence)

SRI KRISHNA :—May you prosper, my daughter. Where are Usha and Aniruddha? (They enter)

USHA :—(Seeing her father) O! father, how are you? (seeing his arms are all right) I was afraid what had happened to you.

BANA :—Have no fear, child. The loss of those arms is no matter. I have merely slipped off a burden. Do obeisance to your grandfather, and to Narada Maharshi.

USHA :—I shall do your bidding. (Stands beside her husband.)

SRI KRISHNA :—Aniruddha, your boyish prank has caused all this trouble. Make your humble salutations to your father-in-law and Narada Maharshi.

ANIRUDDHA :—As you command. (Aniruddha and Usha do obeisance to the elders)

BANA :—The priests have been asked to make preparations for the marriage. Let us go there.

SRI KRISHNA :—Very well. Rukmini, Satyabhama and everybody else have come expecting the marriage. If you send word to the camp they will also be present for the ceremony.

BANA :—This will be done. (They all go in).

USHA :—(To Aniruddha) You too go in, love; I shall come in a moment. (He also leaves. Usha takes hold of Chitralekha) I have a request to make to you, Chitra.

TRIVENI

CHITRALEKHA :—You are very formal, Usha.

USHA :—Leave that aside. Now this is my request. You also agree to marry Aniruddha. I shall ask him to agree.

CHITRALEKHA :—Usha, please say no more about it ; my marriage is over. My lover married me in a dream and disappeared. I cannot marry again. Be happy with Aniruddha. I shall be happy in seeing your happiness.

USHA :—Is that the final word ?

CHITRALEKHA :—Quite.

USHA :—As you please then.

CHITRALEKHA :—(To herself) Did Usha mean this offer or make it merely out of civility ? (Seeing Narada near by, looks ashamed.)

NARADA :—Are you discontented, Chitralekha ?

CHITRALEKHA :—No—revered sire.

NARADA :—Supposing you are, I would say give up discontent. The supreme Lord calls each person to His service in a different way. The invitation may come to you differently.

CHITRALEKHA :—I am waiting. But when the invitation comes, how shall I know it is the real one ? This was an invitation just now.

NARADA :—The ear knows when the strings are in tune. The mind will know when the proper invitation comes. This call to you was not one to accept. That is why your mind turned away from it. The rule is : keep the heart pure ; the call will come in proper time ; and when it comes you will know.

(Sri Krishna and Baneswara enter in front of the curtain)

SRI KRISHNA :—This alliance that has taken place today, has confirmed our friendship. We could not be nearer.

BANA :—Though my grandfather was your devotee, I looked upon you as my enemy all these days. I am happy that you have forgivern this. What I say is not merely wisdom learnt by defeat. Nor is it merely due to the desire that my child should be happy in your house. I pray on my own account that I should be counted as your own.

USHA

SRI KRISHNA :—Good sir, I have never stood aloof from him who desired my friendship. Make sure only of your love to me. Of love on my part have no doubt.

BANA :—I am grateful. (He goes).

(Enter Satyabhama)

SATYABHAMA :—The bride and bridegroom are seated. Instead of wasting your time here, you might as well come and see them.

SRI KRISHNA :—Nobody came and told us.

SATYABHAMA :—Have I not come now?

SRI KRISHNA :—Look at it, Narada. She told us just now and so I should have gone already there. This is married bliss and reason!

SATYABHAMA :—Who doubts that it is bliss and reason? Not you! Come, come, and do not waste time. (All go. Satyabhama aside to Krishna) Come and see the fun. If we had delayed ten days, we should have had the decking with flowers¹ instead of marriage.

SRI KRISHNA :—Refined women like you have to be meticulous in these matters. Usha is a Rakshasa girl. What does it matter?

SATYABHAMA :—Now Krishna, what do you think? We call these people Rakshasas, do not we? They call us just the same. That woman they call Malini said in my hearing that we talked like Rakshasa women.

SRI KRISHNA :—Did she refer to you or to others also?

SATYABHAMA :—Enough of that, come. If I am a Rakshasa woman, won't you be a Rakshasa?

SRI KRISHNA :—Anyhow we are entering into alliances with Rakshasas.

SATYABHAMA :—If you have a large family you cannot afford to distinguish between Suras and Asuras. Your descendants have to go elsewhere for girls. And then you also don't make any distinction between person and person. Any one who approaches you as friend you treat as friend.

¹ A beautiful ceremony performed during the fourth month of pregnancy.

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SRI KRISHNA:—True. (They go in)

(Curtain rises. Sri Krishna, Narada, Banasura and others enter the marriage pavilion and take their seats. Usha and Aniruddha make prostrations to elders.)

BANA:—Isn't the function over? (As Usha bows her head and makes salutation) Live long and happy as wedded wife. Your mother did not live to see this. If the musicians have come, let them show some of their skill before Sri Krishna.

LEELA:—The musicians have all hidden themselves owing to Narada's presence.

BANA:—You sing a song then. (To Sri Krishna) If you hear her sing, sire, you will arrange for her wedding also.

SRI KRISHNA:—That is not difficult. There are many youths among us.

LEELA:—(Sings)

Come, O sister, come with me
To where the jasmine and tuberose
Bloom by Jumna's hither shore,
And where the slow breeze wafts their fragrance
As from heaven's open door.

Come, sweet sister, come with me
To where on Jumna's spacious sands
The moon's clear light has come to play,
Where all our friends have gone to seek
And find Sri Krishna if they may.

Come, my sister, come with me
To where, concealed behind the trees
By Jumna's stream, our Krishna plays
His flute to rob the hearts of those
Who hear and leave them in a maze.

Come, O sister, come with me
We two shall go to Jumna's sands
And drink the strains of Krishna's song
And with the moonlight we shall swoon.
Nay, sister, we are here too long.
Come, O sister, come with me.

USHA

SRI KRISHNA :—Why, this is a song from my part of the country. How did it come here ?

BANA :—You conquered our kingdom today. You had conquered our people's hearts earlier still. Once before when I heard this song I became angry, but now I hear it, it pleases me.

SRI KRISHNA :—(To Chitralekha) Well, my daughter, come to Dwaraka with your sister, and find your Krishna there. (Chitralekha is looking at Narada)

NARADA :—Have you felt the call, Chitralekha ?

CHITRALEKHA :—Is it the call ? O ! I am so happy.

USHA :—What is it, Chitra ?

NARADA :—She too will come to Dwaraka.

SRI KRISHNA :—Yes. Chitralekha and Leelavati should come. Usha must have her friends with her.

BANA :—Certainly, as it pleases you. Now, will the ladies sing the benediction ?

(Married women come and perform *Arathi*)

Come bless the Lord who is the life
That lives in water, earth and sky ;
Come bless him who is mercy's self
And Lord of all eternally ;
Come bless the Lord who is compact
Of Being, Truth and endless Bliss ;
Sing 'He is firm upon his throne
And all that is is ever His.'
Come bless the Lord.

The March into the Night

By NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

Endless, endless labours the way :
Its meanderings seem always to come back near to the same
old familiar spot.
We have travelled through long ages and countless lives,
Through immemorial vistas of Time, as though through all
the length of Eternity—
And yet see we not the same old sun jogging up and down
Between its same old prison bars ?
The lone luminaries afar that appear so close to the very heart
of the Great Mystery,
Twinkle and blink as inconsciently as ever :
The cold and barren face of the moon stares as bland and
stupid as its wont :
The same old shadow still lingers at our feet and entangles
them inexorably :
And the eternal viper remains coiled fast into the darkness
of our entrails.....
The march of aeons has brought us none the nearer to Light
or Deliverance.

Ah, Soul, we have indeed progressed into obscurity,
Into a deeper and deeper gloom have we entered.—
Yet who is this intrepid voyager that has dared the other
Unknown, the nether profundities ?
It is thou, O my Soul, it is the Light itself, the beacon from
above !
For whither else could progress lie ? . . .
Towards Light and more Light ?
But the Soul is All-Light and needs no illumination ;
It is Darkness that yearns for the Light
And so the Soul has descended in answer
Into the gloom . . .

THE MARCH INTO THE NIGHT

The gloom stretches interminable,
The abyss seems fathomless,—
Only to the spirit that ventures with its own lantern :
But my Soul is never alone—the Mother of Light upbears
it --

A cataract of limitless blaze swirls behind
And presses it forward in and through the gloom
That will roll out and melt,
Sooner perhaps than one may believe,—
The Soul and gloom and all--
Right on the other side
Into the free and infinite and sheer translucence.
;

The Late Dr. Rangachariar

By K. CHANDRAEKILAKAN, M.A., B.L.

When the history of Madras gets recorded, there is a name which will appear towering above the rest with its sure hold on our lasting impressions. It is the name of 'the Doctor'. There is something in the appellation which of itself demands our unalloyed gratitude. That is the pre-eminent reason why Dr. Rangachariar will be ever remembered. We know the doctor's is the most important profession, not even excepting the lawyer's, which is equally distinguished. But the better the kind of profession one belongs to, the more desirable it is that one should be better of its kind. One honourable calling does not differ much from another in its service to society; but the doctor's needs must be the most serviceable. And Dr. Rangachariar never struck anyone but that he existed for others, ever diligent in his succour to the suffering, ever planning for their health and welfare.

Years back when, in this city of distances, no other doctor could be induced to respond to urgent calls with innate promptitude and celerity, Dr. Rangachariar was the first to fly to his patient's side, no matter how poor and unknown, whether in the heart of the city or on its fringes. It eschewing every other thought in the concentration upon his work of saving lives would imprint the doctor with the mark of an angel, he was indeed an angel. Like science, he seemed to conquer the forces of nature in his steadfast aim of help and progress to humanity. The tremendous speed of his ear, the silent working of his mind in an atmosphere charged with the keenest expectation of the consequences of life and death, the utter lack of communicativeness on his part when faced with a grave situation, all denoted his intense devotion to his work, and his work only. Never could it be



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laid at his door that he posed for being profound or was hasty to escape strain and strenuous labour. If he showed himself quick and overcoming all personal inconveniences in the discharge of his duties during the day, he was even more ready to help the diseased and the dying in the gloomier hours of the night, denying himself both the necessary rest and sleep. Naturally, his was the one name that spread from mouth to mouth with the great increase in his practice and the still greater increase of his share in relieving the misery of the world. He seemed to seize life with a superhuman energy, harnessing every bit of it to a higher purpose. He reckoned, not without practical wisdom at any rate, that to die in the comfort of an undisturbed conscience is as assuring as that of a secure fortune or a safe investment.

But, strangely enough, he seemed not to recognise God in any form. Perhaps he considered it even 'impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment, when the call of action was imminent. Rather the ceaseless occupation of a life of ungrudging service deprived him of the reflective calm to engender the 'gentle flame of 'devotion' in his heart. The very disproportionate supply of human woes might have so much benumbed his feelings as to take away all sense of devotion to an All-Merciful Being. He conveyed the feeling to the last, that he was not captivated by any religious spirit in the faithful discharge of his duty.

Still unlike the rest of us, he evolved a higher destiny for himself. The spur to his action was not the incentive of lesser men. It is clear he was not actuated by a mere passion to reach the pinnacle of professional glory. Else he would not have chosen an individual line of his own in everything he did, from the manner and method of his treatment to the spirit and sacrifice he brought to bear on his work, no matter how risky and subject to criticism sometimes such a deviation from the generality inclined him. The moment he learnt of an increasing demand on his labours, he was not loath to relegate every other claim on him to a subordinate place in his attentions. He never stopped

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for gain nor spared himself for profit. He neither considered it fair to impose on others his uncommon intellect nor felt it proper that others should be curious to know the springs of his action. He was ever alive to his great powers and was confident to the very core of his being. He shaped his life and carried his thoughts in unison with the distinguished career he carved out. No doctor ever achieved greater reputation with less obtrusion of his self or with more calculated neglect of all arts to win popularity and recognition. He allowed others to share the keen sense of rivalry and success. He had an absolute indifference to the wealth he amassed and a disregard for all professions and fuss that combine to aid the accumulation of importance in social circles. His manner was generally abrupt and reticent. It was ~~legitimately~~ born of a feeling that wasting talk and gossip during work would lure away the mind from realising the full responsibility of the task before it. He did not welcome idle pleasure or conviviality, and if he happened to sail for a distant land, he preferred to leave the station without informing even his closest friends when exactly he would move away, lest their warm demonstrations should embarrass him.

It is but natural that such a brilliant man with a conspicuous title to admiration should have excited jealousy in his colleagues when he was in the Government's employment. True, he was not much disposed to co-operate with others in his work, with that superior brain of which he was justly conscious. True also, that ordinary minds, when brought into contact with his, felt the depression of inferiority complex. It was patent, his mind had a precision that amazed his co-adjudicators. They could not keep pace with the ever invigorating resourcefulness of his brain. It was assuringly collected even in the vortex of complication. It was always self sufficient, never self-deceptive. It never took in anything for granted nor gave up everything that was offered as useless. Throughout, this sane attitude to think for himself stood him in good stead. His early distinction as a sure hand at every form of surgery; his increasing reputation in the mosossil for

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his creditable handling of the most difficult major operations ; his unparalleled skill in maternity cases ; his splendid courage in running a private nursing home of his own after resigning his connection with the General Hospital,—all speak volumes of his ability to rise to unapproachable eminence in the profession. To find him working like a machine without interval in the Nursing Home from the break of day till the sun had actually crossed the meridian, with nothing to wet his throat save a cup of buttermilk occasionally, convinced us of his stamina to sustain him in the varied and taxing work he performed. Notice him in a critical situation brought almost face to face with Death trying to cast the noose round his patient's neck, his lips compressed in thoughtful silence, his gait rapid and decisive, his intolerance rampant at the anxiety expressed by the patient's relatives, his looks demanding room for his movement in the sick-room and freedom from prying eyes round the sick-bed, his whole manner indicating extreme control of irritability. One might even consider him almost at his wit's end to save the ebbing life. His powers would then rise equal to the occasion. He employed all his acquired skill and experience in finding out a way for ensuring hope. At his suggestion his assistants would fly and fetch the necessary instruments. There would be no noise or commotion, but only briskness adequately joined to alertness. There would be no lack of clarity of thought, no rashness exposing want of foresight, none of the incorrigible fads from which specialists suffer, not a word or sign of slackening effort, nothing but intense functioning of the mind to the last, with all the sincerity of purpose and optimism at his command. Doctors there have been and are, prized for their powers of efficient diagnosis ; but none who could more readily and unostentatiously devise remedies without causing any the least anxiety in the patient about the dire malady or its fatal course. There have been many experienced men in the profession with a claim to recognition for their infinite capacity to take pains ; but none more prone to combine, so happily, whatever the latest

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scientific thought taught him with the knowledge gained by personal observation of two decades and more.

But to look upon him as purely an automaton is to forget the fine traits which shaped him into a worthy specimen of our race. Beneath the great doctor were visible traces of a spotless character. To adhere to intellectual honesty and independence without fear of losing popularity is no easy thing in any profession, much less in the medical. A busy practitioner, if he desires to become prosperous, can hardly afford to erase, rightly or wrongly, the impression on his patients that medicines alone would work the desired change. It assures him an abiding clientele and a name for drawing upon an inexhaustible memory for medicines, which flow fast from his pen as he writes the prescription. Dr. Rangachariar was never influenced by any such thought to prove his indispensability by a prescription. He was careful in his examination of a case, cautious in his administration of the quantity of doses, and cared not for the patient's favour or ill-will, provided he was himself sure of the nature of the disease and the treatment it required. Sometimes he was so frank as to pronounce the person, seeking consultation with him, free from any actual complaint. He would even repeatedly instil into the mind of his indefatigable client the utter uselessness of medicines when a timely regulation of his diet or exercise could do the needful and restore him to normal health. Unlike a distinguished contemporary, he trusted more to his own intellect than to faith. If he failed in his honest endeavours, he never resigned himself to a higher power. He seemed to devote no more thought to the interaction and play of Destiny in such matters than his Rolls Royce did as it noiselessly sped through the thoroughfares of men. He suffered little from philosophic tendencies that counsel complete surrender of effort under the omnipotence of Fate. But if his mind was not yielding to the wider interests of public life like that of the late Dr. Nanjunda Rao of Mylapore, it worked within the chosen confines with a rare dedication and wholesome detachment. He was more

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inclined to satisfy his own conscience than seek satisfaction of the vast multitude of his patients. His judgment only was his friend, his reason alone his philosopher, his optimism his chief guide. Once, in the oppressive suspense in which people found themselves regarding the condition of a patient, a bold lady thought it not improper to acquaint the doctor of the considerable worry of the relatives of the patient and asked him whether another doctor's help at such a juncture would not be desirable in arriving at a decision about the nature of the illness. He was heard to remark afterwards as he left the house 'she thinks she can beard the lion in its own den'. Such was his attitude to any attempt to interfere with him. He was strong in his resolution and braved the stoutest opposition if he had to. He could put up with any scandal and rumour about him. He never looked affected or appeared to take notice of their existence. More than once, vile jealousy engineered the most objectionable form of rumour against him. It was said in the year 1926 that he had died at Ooty and his body was to be removed by train to Madras. The information spread like wild fire and many were the enquiries that reached him. He never probed into the causes of or the psychology behind such an outrageous invention of a story. He smiled gently at such spurious anecdotes, while enthusiastically enjoying a game of bridge at the Lawley Institute on the hills, with surprising ease and unconcern.

This unconcern and detachment he evinced in every phase of his life. His living a life untrammelled by conventions and contritions of any kind elevated him from abject conformity to public opinion. If he was generous in his impulses, he sought no reason to justify his bounty. He never argued nor tried to explain. He scarcely wavered in choosing his own manner of appreciation of a good thing.

Few others sought less to earn undying plaudits or proved more immune against the temptations and vanities of a successful career. Unlike many others in the grip of unprecedented success that wipes out all vestiges of delicacy,

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he was loath to dwell upon his achievements or indulge in listening to others' narration of them to his face. If ever he was overcome by feelings of confusion and conflict, it was only when his beneficiaries tried to evince their admiration for him in a fitting manner. He was deliberately gentle and considerate to his numerous patients and never bargained for the amounts he should receive from them as his fees. Whatever was paid was accepted by him with no more feeling than one of placid satisfaction that he did his duty and they theirs in return. But if ever one tried to reduce the amount of his medical bill after asking repeatedly for it, he would not hesitate to show his resentment in the sharpest manner possible. 'You see, I am not going to be dealt with like that,' he would utter, and as the jerky sentences finished with the closing of those lips in derision, one felt that to have incurred his displeasure was to have courted disgrace of the worst type.

The picture would remain incomplete without mentioning the lighter aspects of the man. Under cover of a somewhat reserved nature, he hid a storehouse of rich humour and pleasantry. In a facetious company comprised of his close friends he could freely employ any amount of lively banter and subtle joke. 'What a garrulous man he is!' said a friend of his in high position, 'you can listen to him for hours without flagging.' Maybe he was not a polished conversationalist or a connoisseur of diverse arts, yet his culture had just that measure of sobriety and commonsense to enable him to judge rightly of those who displayed them.

As a safe physician and a remarkable surgeon he will be placed high among the best in the ranks of the medical profession. Whatever record leap to light, he shall never be criticised for mismanaging a case that ended fatally. He might have occasionally given room for complaint regarding his indifference to slight changes in the health of a person otherwise keeping a normal condition. He might have appeared unsympathetic to a mind requiring constant attendance without any justification whatever in his eye. He might have hurt

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some with his somewhat sharp and truculent expressions if they tried to assist him. But never was he less wary or observant of the points of complaint than any of the most patient or painstaking doctors. Why, he possessed a most enviable mixture of the qualities that were best in others. Most memorable indeed, or rather cherishable, than all the rest of his traits, was his complete emancipation from vilifying tendencies that beset others in the same field as himself, though, if occasion forced it, he could show himself quite capable of a crushing retort or retaliation.

His death has been mourned by high and low as having struck the deepest blow at them. Many who have not known him too closely or grasped the inner workings of the man, feel they have lost in him a genuine friend and benefactor. We wonder then, was it the dominating personality of the doctor that influenced them? Or was it his complete individuality or his singular disregard of the normal methods by which doctors try to impress their patients? Or was it something sharply penetrating in his looks and soothingly resonant in his inspiring voice? Or was it; after all, the inexplicable glamour clinging to him of his Rolls Royce and Moth-plane? For whatever reason, he stamped himself vividly on the mind of the people of a vast presidency. He is indeed imperishable, although the cruel flames have consumed his great and good freightage. He lives: for he belongs to that order of men who, like stars, shine for ever, reminding life on earth of True Labour having 'its summit in heaven'.

Rabindranath's Paintings

By G. VENKATACHALAM

India recognised the genius of Tagore, as a poet, only after Europe put its seal of approval on his poetry; and now that Europe and America, through their connoisseurs and critics, acclaim him as a painter of great distinction and rare merit, India is slowly beginning to acknowledge his gifts in that direction. When news first reached India that Tagore was holding an exhibition of his works in one of the leading salons in Paris and that artists and art-critics were applauding his art; and when further it was told that art galleries in Europe and the States were purchasing his pictures at fabulous prices, many wondered and thought it a huge joke. But, as it proved later, Tagore held his exhibitions not only in Paris but in other leading art-centres in England, Germany, and New York, and some of the foremost National Art Galleries in those countries vied with one another in possessing his paintings, and his success as a painter was one of the biggest surprises in the art history of modern times.

But when he recently held an exhibition in the city of Bombay, his pictures literally puzzled and mystified the Indian public. One noticed worried looks in the eyes of visitors, and heard all sorts of amusing comments. 'You call this art?', snapped an outraged society lady, herself a widely travelled woman and a writer, but of nervous temperament. 'We don't understand these pictures, frankly we don't', observed many well-meaning friends and admirers of Tagore and his poetry. 'This art is beyond us', confessed a young girl artist, and added cynically, 'One must be born, I suppose, in Bengal to appreciate it.' Here and there one met a person who showed interest in the pictures and discovered some artistic merits in them. If Tagore's paintings do not arouse any enthusiasm or admiration for his art, they at least set

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people thinking about newer modes of artistic expression than one is generally used to.

Tagore's works are not to be judged by the ordinary accepted academic standards, for the simple reason that they are not painted after any accepted style, school or tradition. No rules of the art are applicable to them. They are just creations of playful moods and unfettered joy, and so they share the nature and significance of all original impulses. Laws and rules do not give birth to art ; art creates its own idioms and expressions. Thus there is really no criterion by which original creative efforts like those of Tagore's could be judged. They must be appraised on their own intrinsic worth, their inner vital quality.

Tagore was not trained in any academic school. He never studied the art of painting under any master, nor does he consciously copy or follow any style or technique. The creative urge in him plays with lines and colours which take definite shape and design under the spell of his genius. He never strives after any perfection of form or idea but just lets his fancy or imagination create figures or portraits, scenes or symbols, effortlessly and without prejudice. They are like the play-creations of a child, simple, spontaneous and beautiful.

Some are crude and unfinished ; some are delightfully drawn with an eye for precision of line, balance and composition. Whatever may be their æsthetical merits, there is no doubt that everyone of them is intensely alive with a dynamic vitality, like a piece of sculpture. There is grace, beauty, movement and suppleness in every line and curve that he draws. His art is really an inspired art ; and there is freshness and originality in all his single figure studies and group compositions. The poetic and lyrical nature of his pictures are obvious. As he says himself : 'My pictures are my versification in lines. If by chance they are entitled to claim recognition, it must be primarily for some rhythmic significance of form which is ultimate, and not for any interpretation of an idea or representation of a fact.' Even the most un-

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finished picture of his has this 'rhythmic significance of form,' and it is this that makes his art so interesting.

Tagore seldom bothers himself with the 'regular paraphernalia of an artist : studio, easels, palette, brushes, pigments, canvases, glues and the rest. He paints as he likes and on all kinds of papers, white or coloured, rough or smooth, big or small, even on bits of newspapers. Some of his striking pictures were done with the aid of a simple fountain-pen or piece of cloth or his own thumb and fingers. His portrait studies executed in this style are exceedingly clever. His landscape sketches have a distinct atmosphere, and he now and then paints them in colours. He has a partiality for ordinary liquid colours and it is amazing the rich colourful effects he gets out of them. His decorative designs are genuinely original and some of them ultra-modern and very intriguing.

He has indeed become a prolific painter. He has done several thousands within the last four years, and when he gets the mood he paints dozens of them at a stretch and in a single sitting. His energy is amazing and his enthusiasm is simply contagious. An Indian artist who has observed closely Tagore at work writes : 'As regards the composition of his paintings, our Poet-Painter displays masterly skill. Once he determines the subject of his picture, the outline and spacing come off spontaneously. There is not the slightest faltering and indecision. The work progresses with a series of sweeping movements and the balanced composition remains intact. The lines are drawn with a sure hand and the spacing is so accurate as is only possible from the most experienced artists with years of practice behind him.'

On the whole Rabindranath's paintings have an originality, sincerity, truthfulness and vital quality to be ranked as high as any of the modern masters. Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy's pithy statement that Tagore's pictures are not childish but child-like is about the sanest criticism so far offered on this new phase of Tagore's genius.

Eleven Greatest Living Indians

By K. ISWARA DUTT

Who are the eleven greatest living Indians? But why eleven? Because they usually form a team. Then, to repeat my question, who are our eleven greatest? The question appears to be incredibly simple: yet it is immensely difficult to answer. He alone knows the difficulty who addresses himself to the task of making a list. While it would be easy to mention, say, the greatest statesman, the greatest poet, the greatest scientist, the greatest philosopher or the greatest representative in this or that sphere of human endeavour, it is a tough and hazardous job to record the names of the eleven greatest *men*, since it hardly admits of so facile a classification. The primary difficulty centres round one's very conception of greatness.

Happily this is not a matter to be settled by vote. It is not a popularity competition. It will also be admitted that a prominent man is entirely different from an eminent man and that an eminent man is not necessarily—and in many cases emphatically not—a great man. If it is permissible to illustrate my point, Maulana Shaukat Ali is a prominent man, and no more than that. Everyone would agree with Professor Harold Laski when he says, 'My friend Sir Tej is a very eminent man.' I can't say—at any rate I am not sure at this stage—if he will figure in my list of the eleven greatest Indians. Indisputably Gandhiji does. But what is a great man? One can more easily describe than define a great man. I don't think anyone has done it better than Disraeli whom I would like to quote in this connection. Here is a striking passage from his wit and wisdom:

'What is a great man? Is it a Minister of State? Is it a victorious general? A gentleman in the Windsor uniform? Is it a Field Marshal covered with stars? Is it a

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prelate or Prince? A King or an Emperor? He may be all these. Yet these, as we must all daily feel, are not necessarily great men. A great man is one who affects the mind of his generation.

Here is surely a basis, and a sound basis, on which one may proceed and indulge in the pleasant pastime of erecting one's own gallery of the greatest living Indians.

To set down the first name there is no difficulty, for there is no doubt. He is so obvious. With apologies to Macaulay the rhetorician, it may be claimed that the Everest is not more decidedly the tallest of mountain peaks, the Mississipi is not more decidedly the biggest of rivers, the Taj is not more decidedly the most beautiful of marble mausoleums, than Mahatma Gandhi is the greatest of living men. And when one speaks of him one need not restrict oneself to India. He has not only no equal: he has no second. Of him it can be said what was thus said of Shakespeare by a contemporary English writer:

'He is the greatest thing we have done. He is our challenger in the lists of the world, and there is none to cross swords with him. Like Sirius, he has a magnitude of his own. Take him away from our heavens, conceive him never to have been born, and the imaginative wealth of life shrinks to a lower plane, and we are left, in Iago's phrase, "a poor thing".'

Notwithstanding his limitations and mistakes of policy which had strange repercussions on the destinies of at least two nations, his greatness is so self-revealing that beside him all other celebrities look dwarfed. He has convulsed the world with his ideas on the one hand and the manifestations of his moral grandeur on the other; he has made, as Gokhale said, heroes out of common clay, and translated us, in Mr. C. R. Reddy's inimitable phrase, from oblivion into history. He is, in one word, incomparable.

It is a relief that one can name the second of our greatest men with equal confidence. There is something peculiarly appropriate in proceeding from the man who is responsible

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more than any other for the great national awakening to the one who has given *that* national awakening a voice, and a voice too which greeted all ears, whether in the East or in the West, with a melody almost divine. There will be general agreement with Pandit Jawaharlal's opinion that ' Rabindranath Tagore has given to our nationalism the outlook of internationalism and has enriched it with art and music and the magic of his words, so that it has become the full-blooded emblem of India's awakened spirit '. The Bard of Santiniketan is, indeed, ' the laureate of humanity '.

Who comes next? Now is the real difficulty. In sheer despair I give up all pretensions to assigning the order of merit. While I think that the next four places in my list should go to a group of intellectuals, I fail to see how anyone can decide the rank between four such men as Bose and Ray, Raman and Radhakrishnan, who have by common consent raised India's status in the estimation of the civilised world.

The oldest of them, Sir J. C. Bose, who is now 75, has ceaselessly striven, in his own words, ' to bring the science of the East and of the West into closer affinity for the benefit of humanity '. To what effect? He has been recognised as the greatest biologist, as the ' revealer of a new world ', and as one in whom is seen ' an invincible, perhaps immortal, quality which has given a permanence to the Indian civilisation such as no other nation has produced '. And what more glowing tribute can be possibly paid than was done by the Literary Editor of *The Fortnightly Review* who is reported to have said that ' in Sir Jagadish the culture of thirty centuries has blossomed into a scientific brain of an order which we cannot duplicate in the West '?

As a chemist of eminence and a captain of industry, as a teacher and patriot, and above all as one of the most striking examples of ' plain living and high thinking ', Sir P. C. Ray has a secure place among the greatest living Indians. Barring Gandhiji, there is perhaps none other than the veteran Acharya of whom it can more appropriately be said that ' greatness never looked so simple '. His ceaseless industry,

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his inexhaustible energy, his powers of organisation, his patriotic fervour and humanitarian zeal, and his unending battle against the unemployment of educated youth and the poverty of the people are a source of inspiration to his countrymen.

To have won the Nobel Prize for science is no ordinary distinction, while to have won it on the right side of fifty is no small sign of human greatness. It is India's pride that Sir C. V. Raman occupies a place beside Einstein. He is the author of a discovery which has changed the whole conception of radiation process and already made his name a permanent possession of the world of science.

It is among the obvious limitations of philosophy that in assessing a philosopher's worth there is nothing specific to which one can point out as an outstanding contribution. Yet it is easy to include Sir S. Radhakrishnan among our greatest living men. He is perhaps the finest example of intellectual refinement and philosophic wisdom and reveals a rare combination of what Matthew Arnold terms 'sweetness and light'. As a scholar and thinker he has attained an international position, while in interpreting the West and the East to one another he is playing the role of a cultural and spiritual ambassador. His gift for lucid exposition and moving utterance is the envy—and sometimes the despair—of his compeers. Few have his genius for condensing in a sentence 'the secrets of a life' or for summing up in an epigram the secrets of the universe.

Five more names are required to complete my list. The difficulty naturally increases as I proceed. Perhaps the difficulty is a trifle less than I have just now feared it is, since I have not so far mentioned him who, with the inevitable exception of Mahatmaji, is the greatest national worker we have. A life-long servant of the nation, one who has stepped into the breach at every crisis, a man of incorruptible patriotism and unsullied honour, and a rare example of the combination of ancient tradition and modern temper, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is among the indispensables.

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Who next? I personally think that the next place goes to the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri whose rise is one of the revelations of modern Indian history. As Gokhale's successor and Gandhi's friend, as India's servant and statesman, and as the Empire's orator and ambassador, Mr. Sastri has made history. All over the world he has been received as a 'humanitarian agent who combines the breadth of a statesman with the depth of a scholar, and the fervour of an evangelist' and is as much respected for his character as admired for his calibre. There is no exaggeration in the claim of *The Nation and Athenaeum* that he is 'a representative of all that is best in Indian national aspirations—Gandhi's equal in unchallengeable purity of motive, and immeasurably his superior in practical wisdom'.

It is almost with a sense of inevitability that one turns from the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri to the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. It is true that he is criticised (as Gladstone was said to be admired) 'by all kinds of incompatible people on all kinds of incompatible grounds', but there is no denying his greatness. As a lawyer he is distinguished, while as a constitutional lawyer he has few equals and no superiors: as a politician he strenuously upheld the cause of the nation, both at home against communal cliques and conspiracies, and abroad against alien interests and diplomacies: as a statesman he has won Gokhale's prestige and valiantly fought for the recognition and attainment of the federal ideal; and as a man he is 'more than the sum of all that he said or did'. With the exception of Pandit Motilal, he is tallest of the Kashmiri Pandits who are, so to say, the ruling race in Northern India. He has learning without pedantry, eloquence without decorative frills, culture which is the product of a happy commingling of Hindu tradition, Western education, and Islamic influence. To the personal ascendancy he has established for himself in Indian politics there can be no greater tribute than that he never depended on parties or groups for his authority to speak in the name of India. People who talk of his political

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ambitions have the excuse of ignorance, for any day he would be glad to leave the din and dust of polities for the unparalleled recreation provided by his books and collection of pipes. His unique services to the motherland, his great gifts, not the least of which is his genius for hospitality, and that indefinable something in him which distinguishes his presence, entitle him to figure in any list of India's greatest living men.

I find there are still two more places to be filled for which there is a scramble. I am, however, clear in my mind that my list needs a feminine touch. It is not out of chivalry but out of a sense of fairness that I salute Mrs. Sarojini Naidu as one of the greatest living Indians. She is acknowledged to be one of the world's greatest women. Poet, patriot, peacemaker, nurse—(the Florence Nightingale of *Parnakuti*)—she has played a rôle not less immense than it is interesting. She is a spell-binder. Who that has an ear 'to the rhythm of a great melody, to the incantation of a noble oratory' fails to be charmed and thrilled by her? She is one of the sweetest symbols of Indian greatness.

Now I am in the face of a crisis. There is room in my list only for one more name among the several names that press for consideration. Should the remaining place be assigned to the handsome and refined young prophet, Sjt. J. Krishnamurti who claims to have 'attained' and calls upon everyone else to attain likewise, without the aid of priests or of organised religion? Or is it Sjt. Aurobindo who illumined the political firmament of India with a flood of incandescence and is now ruminating on the mysteries of the Universe? If not, is it then Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer who is reputed and respected as 'India's most accurate thinker'?

Great as they are, it is none of them who takes the vacant place in my list. I feel I should give preference to one who is a man of the future and who has already established his hold over, and caught the imagination of, the people of India. Who is he other than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru? Son of Pandit Motilal of imperishable fame, Jawaharlal has 'affected the mind of his generation' more than his father did and

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much more than the celebrities whom I have just mentioned. He knows his mind ; he lives dangerously ; he ' dares and never grudges the throe '. As Mr. Brailsford pithily put it, ' this man is a fighter '. The militant follower of a mystic leader, Jawaharlal is, in Mr. Bernays's happy phrase, ' the prophet of youth '. He is, so they say, a potential Mussolini or a Hitler.

Here is my galaxy then, consisting of Gandhi and Tagore, Bose and Ray, Raman and Radhakrishnan, Malaviyaji, Sastri and Sapru, Sarojini and Jawaharlal, who compare favourably with the eleven greatest men of any nation in the world. All of them are of course not equally great, and in the nature of things can't be. Further, contemporary estimates can't stand the test of time. As each year passes the greatness of contemporary celebrities dwindles. Time mercilessly wipes out, certainly some, perhaps many, of the names from my impressive list. A century hence, today's great men may only be known (to students of research) as Mahatmaji's contemporaries. Sweet, indeed, are the revenges—or are they the ravages?—of time.

Joad on Radhakrishnan

By V. SUBRAHMANYA IYER, B.A.

(Retired Registrar, Mysore University)

No one that has given any thought to the supremely interesting subject : Whither goes mankind ? can help paying a tribute of unqualified praise to Mr. C. E. M. Joad for his excellent book 'Counter Attack from the East'.¹ It is one of the most original attempts made, in recent times, at an evaluation of the civilisations of the youthful West and of the grey-headed East. What has called forth so thoughtful an enquiry is evidently the appearance of the series of remarkable speeches and writings of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the greatest of modern exponents and interpreters of ancient Indian thought. That Radhakrishnan combines in himself extraordinary learning and intellectual acumen, besides striking originality, is universally acknowledged. In weighing Radhakrishnan's exposition in the balance Mr. Joad has excelled all his predecessors in point of fairness, acuteness and independence. He is singularly free from the blinding colour-complex which has so often vitiated the judgments of most Western critics of the East. Joad's exceptional success, in spite of Leonard Woolf's hostile criticism, is not a little due to his estimates being based upon the most impartial of standards, the conclusions of science. Had he only chosen, like Dr. Gore, the view-point of the dogma of religion, he would have given us nothing but a windbag of passion and vilification. Mr. Joad does not seek to hide whatever appears to him to be faulty in the culture of the East or of the West. His determination to call a spade a spade reveals that his sole objective is the search for truth. He is unlike Bishop Barnes, the Gifford lecturer, who though a scientist of no mean order missed the glaring fact, which Joad has seen, that the Hindu

¹ 'Counter Attack from the East' by C.E.M. Joad. (Allen and Unwin, London.)

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ideal is less disgraced by the spirit of proselytisation than most religions, by the anomaly of proving their superiority by 'roasting, racking, disembowelling'. This book, whose refined humour is not its least interesting feature, is therefore one that no serious minded thinker can afford to ignore.

In the extensive literature that Radhakrishnan has already produced, which Joad has so patiently and carefully studied, it is not merely this Indian thinker's wonderful mastery of language, literature and thought of the West that Mr. Joad admires, but also the shrewdness with which he perceives the weaknesses of the West as well as of the East. Radhakrishnan warns the world against a continued pursuit of the doubtful and false ideals in both, without discrimination. He is therefore said to have made a 'counter attack from the East' on the West. Now, Joad examines this attack in the book under review.

Turning first to the characteristics of Western culture Mr. Joad himself sums them up in the words:

'In general the spirit of the West is hostile to religion. . . . It repudiates what the Victorians called their morals as a preliminary to the adoption of a frankly avowed Hedonism . . . (there is in it) a fundamental scepticism as to the reality of those values which have been traditionally regarded as the ends of human action. . . . The result is that nowhere in the Western world today is there any accepted view as to what men ought to believe, how they ought to act or what things they ought to admire. . . . In a word the ideals of good life in the West are so "self-stultifying" as to produce a positive sense of "deep dissatisfaction" or mental "depression".'

For this 'disease' of the West, which is beginning to infect the East also, Radhakrishnan prescribes the remedy of Eastern religion, in more concentrated and powerful doses of it than has been administered till now. But Joad, after a most thoroughgoing investigation of the Eastern prescription, comes to the conclusion that there is nothing new in it. A rose would smell as sweet called by any other name.

What the West calls *scientific* or worldly wisdom, the East denominates *spiritual* or religious. He says :

'Thus Radhakrishnan invokes the *religious* insight of the East to give a *spiritual* background to the recommendations of worldly wisdom of the West. Taking the intimation of the *aesthetic* experience, he interprets in the light of *religious* experience, which transcends our vision, and of his *spiritual* theory of the universe which outstrips our thought . . . Radhakrishnan confirms, in a word, by the light of the *spirit* the practical ethic which we in the West have hammered by the experimental method of *science*.' (The italics are mine)

Next, turning to the East, both the authors agree that the East is 'decadent', that 'there is (in it) a lack of vitality and a spiritual flagging, that it is drifting, and that it is clinging to the shell of religion. It is in danger of being swamped by vigorous tides of the West.' 'Each (East and West) lacks something that is essential: each has something to give. . . . The East has some virtue which has conferred on it a certain 'longevity' while those civilisations which devoted their energies to politics, patriotism and aggrandisement have destroyed themselves. The members of the East have their own ideals of 'good life' which teach them 'how to employ leisure', 'how to sit and listen' and 'to meditate in solitude', while the Westerns are often ill at ease and ever on the hunt for ways of spending time.

In the course of his examination of the Eastern recipe, Joad has gone so deep into the subject as few other critics have till now done. Joad approaches it from the agnostic or non-religious—not anti-religious—standpoint, while Radhakrishnan stands by religion as Joad himself admits. There seems to be such a wide gulf between them in their view-points that the only common ground *seems* to be that of Hedonism, i.e., of happiness in life before death of the body, though Radhakrishnan seeks happiness in the next world also as a man of religion. But inasmuch as the criticism covers an extensive ground, it is not possible here to do more than glance at a few salient features of their respective views.

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Joad appears to be labouring under the misapprehension that, in the East, religion is philosophy, though religion is certainly recognised as a step to it. He does not appear to discriminate between the philosophy of religion (or religious philosophy) and philosophy in general i.e., philosophy of life as a whole. The aim of the former, as he himself indicates, is to seek the *satisfaction* of 'losing the self or the soul in something greater'—and of the latter is to seek that unity of knowledge or ultimate truth that explains the universe as a whole, which Joad dismisses with the light-hearted observation: 'How is this oneness to be achieved? An unregenerate child of my age and civilisation, I do not know. Nor in the last resort can Radhakrishnan tell me.' If Joad were serious here, a whole book of the size of his 'Counter Attack' could have been written by him on' it. Radhakrishnān's aim appears throughout to be to present Eastern thought in the form in which the largest number in the West and also the Westernised East could understand and interest themselves. Religion is what appeals to the immense majority. And intuitive or 'aesthetic' experience and mystic ecstasy are the strongest citadels, erected on the highest peaks of religion, where fully protecting^{*} himself Radhakrishnan delivers his attacks. Radhakrishnan, the man of religion, is evidently applauded by a great majority, who value religion as the dearest possession in life. Yet he does not seem to have carried conviction to scientific minds of the type of Mr. Joad and Mr. Woolf. Philosophy *proper* would have been, I admit, more effective than the philosophy of religion in such cases. But Indian philosophy proper is still 'caviare to the general', as Joad himself would admit (Page 167). Radhakrishnan could not have recourse to it inasmuch as the Western mind is not as yet *rationally* prepared for it, though a few could certainly grasp it. Indian *philosophy* could show Joad not only how most of his criticisms have already been rationally met, but also whether India could offer anything of *real value* to the world, the like of which the sciences and philosophies of the West have not as yet revealed. To grasp it an *intellect* or

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a reason (*Buddhi*) disciplined to that pitch of concentration that is characterised as 'one-pointedness' (*ekagrata*) and of a sharpness keener than the edge of 'a razor' (*kshurika-dhara*) is needed, which the general Western, and I may also add the general Eastern, mind so deep in the distractions of the world, finds it hard yet to attain. And even the few superior *intellects* of the West are so obsessed with their colour or race prejudices that they would have probably scoffed at Radha-krishnan had he displayed some of these unfamiliar wares of philosophy. I do not refer to miracles but solely to scientifically verifiable or rationally proved achievements.

To give a few illustrations. Nearly 2000 years ago Indian philosophy declared that only he who has the *intellect* (*Buddhi*) to grasp the meaning of what is termed 'causal relation' can realise the highest philosophical truths. And in that philosophy—not theology—'cause' is a fiction from the standpoint of pure *truth*, though a *fact* in the merely practical world. How many in the West are prepared to admit it, in spite of their advanced knowledge of science? Just now, a few are making guesses at it. And some of them not being well grounded in it, are off their moorings in making hasty jumps to 'free-will' which is as much a delusion as 'determinism'.

Again, much older is the distinction between 'monism' and 'non-dualism'. And yet Europe and America have not the least idea of the difference between these two concepts, which are as far apart from each other as night from day. The want of this knowledge has led Joad into a maze of arguments about 'unity' and 'multiplicity'.

Nor have Europe and America yet sounded the depths of the meaning of Truth and Reason, though so often they talk of this being real or rational and that not real or rational, as though all men would assent to the verdict of a 'private' judgment, unrecognised by the 'public', whereas India has the unique distinction of having attempted a *definite* elucidation of these matters.

This is not all. The West, while it has carried the

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analysis of the material world to a most amazing depth and accuracy, has not gone beyond the a.b.c. of the mental world in its study. What has it to say of the psychological—not the physiological—value of sleep, the commonest of psychic phenomena? The realists of the West, qualified or non-qualified, brandish 'givenness' as an invulnerable argument. But what about the 'givenness' experienced in dreams? Have they yet even so much as thought of it? What is meant by the 'given'?

The West has yet to realise the full implications of the negation of the causal relation, and the negation of duality of existences. How could the West, without understanding these, comprehend the full significance of *Maya* or the rationale of *Karma* and rebirth? Unless the West has a definite meaning for its 'truth' and 'reason', how can they see the truth of Radhakrishnan's observation that Pluralism is nothing but a vestige of ancestral religion and dogma still lingering in the blood and clogging its free flow? The philosophy of such truths has therefore to be kept in reserve till Europe and America grow older. When Bertrand Russells and Whiteheads, Max Planks and Einstiens, Jeanses and Eddingtons, Woolfs and Joads feel like all true scientists that even a most insignificant speck of dust trodden under feet might reveal truths of the highest value, and when they with such superior intellect in them make up their mind to seek *truth*, be it hidden in the proud palaces of the West or in the ragged cottages of the East, in other words, when the scientific spirit takes a *much stronger* hold on them than at present and makes them heroes (*Dhira*), as the Hindu philosophers say, in the pursuit of Truth *at any cost*, then will they be able to see what of value there is still left in 'decadent' India. Till then men like Radhakrishnan must make use only of the highest concept of the philosophy of *religion* in interpreting the East to the West.

In this philosophy of religion (or religious philosophy) Radhakrishnan makes intuition the pivot of his thought. But Joad is perfectly justified in refusing to subscribe to the whole

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of Radhakrishnan's view of intuition. But the latter who has entrenched himself behind it, has not been so much as shaken, much less overthrown, by his Western critic. As Radhakrishnan has pointed out, 'intuition' and 'intellect' are not independent and separate, faculties of the mind. Their activities are inter-dependent. But as Sankara so repeatedly and so clearly points out, intuition unchecked by intellect is of no value in pure philosophy, though intuition uncontrolled by intellect is of supreme value in religion. In India's pure *philosophy*, reason or intellect reigns supreme, not scriptural or sacred or semi-sacred Authority. And in mysticism intuition is supreme. But reason or intellect always implies intuition, which is never ignored. Hence when thus co-ordinated the intellect is called in Indian philosophy *Buddhi*. And whenever the intellect ignores intuition, it leads to what is known as barren verbal wrangling.

In regard to intuition not subordinated to intellect, let me quote a very recent thinker, Mr. Jastrow. In his 'Effective Thinking,' he says: 'The temptation to make of it (intuition) a marvel or a mystery is often present. If we yield to it, we do not strengthen but impair our thinking powers. With transcendent sources of knowledge we have no concern. Those who believe in inspired doctrines do so. By loyalty to a faith, they may attribute such inspiration to prophets, seers or saints. Because of the prevalence of that tradition, there has been a wide dissemination of the belief in supernatural knowledge, in prediction of the future, revelation by way of dreams, second sight, premonitions.' But Indian *philosophy* never divorces 'intuition' from intellect, nor does it subordinate the latter to the former.

Next, the term 'spirit' has a positive meaning in religion. Radhakrishnan is again left unshaken by Joad in spite of his repudiation of 'spirituality'. But certainly in *philosophy* its 'woolliness', as Mr. Joad contends, is most evident. Unless Croces, Gentiles and the religious Radhakrishnans rise above their mysticism and state definitely and exactly what 'spirit' is, 'spirit' cannot have a place in *philosophy*. If it only means

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'mind' or 'psyche', why do they want another word? Nor do I know what Hegel or Radhakrishnan, who use the concepts or terms current in the West, mean by the 'Absolute'? Is it a concept? If it be non-conceptual, what does the intuition of the Absolute convey? How do we know that the Absolute exists if this Absolute be different from an æsthetic feeling? Here, does the word '*exist*' convey any meaning or is it a meaningless term? And what does '*meaning*' mean? I presume that if Joad had confined himself to *philosophy*, he would probably have more effectively met Radhakrishnan. What the Idealism of the West has failed to answer is the question: Is the 'spirit' or the Absolute merely a hypothesis or an actual entity? If actual, the West has given no means of verifying it.

Another important point for consideration in Joad's criticism is his final *standard* for judging civilisations, that of Hedonism or happiness in life. He says, in the concluding chapter:

The only thing that can give *permanent* satisfaction is the employment of our highest faculties at maximum intensity. . . . The doctrine of effort and activity that I have sketched is pre-eminently the doctrine of the intelligent Hedonist. It alone, on the balance-sheet of life, can give a credit of pleasure over boredom. Throw yourself body and soul into your work, lose yourself in an interest. . . . lift yourself up out of the selfish little pit of vanity and desire which is the self, by giving yourself to something greater than the self, and on looking back you will find that you have been happy . . . devotion to impersonal ends offers the only escape from a fatal self-absorption.'

This is no doubt, to a great extent, true. But how do we know that this happiness is, or will be, *permanent*? When owing to any cause my faculties are impaired, or when I have not the faculty to enjoy music or when I see that pain and death surround me, and when there are others whose faculties are not so far developed, are there no other means of making myself or others happy? If, according to Joad's biologists,

death should be a merging of the individual in the 'greater', the universe, why should this 'losing' or 'merging' cause fear and why should we seek to save others from death as we do? How am I to 'lose' or 'forget' myself in something greater and yet experience what is called 'satisfaction'? What does satisfaction mean on the disappearance of the self? Or again, is there no higher standard than that of happiness? Is deep sleep a happy or an unhappy state? If happy, what are the things in which our highest faculties are employed then? If unhappy, what is it that makes us happy? And if neutral, why do all mankind, nay, even animals, seek sleep or feel unhappy if they be deprived of sleep?

It is true, as Joad observes, that Radhakrishnan is not without detractors. But the attacks on him only raise him to more conspicuous heights... There are millions, nay hundreds of millions in India, who know not the difference between Philosophy and Theology, including Scholasticism and Mysticism, and who have not even dreamt of Science. To such 'quacks', to use Woolf's language, who so often appear in leading journals, philosophy based on science is always like sour grapes. Their glory lies in their 'Sadhanik' (mystic?) experiences leading to 'incandescent intuitions'. We bow to them from as great a distance as we are permitted to stand at and say, 'May they rejoice in their anti-rational and anti-scientific achievements'.

As my object is not to expound Indian *Philosophy* here, I shall content myself with observing that the fact that Radhakrishnan's exposition of Indian thought has evoked such valuable criticism from intellectual (not merely emotional or religious) men is a matter for the most sincere congratulation. If the passion it has roused for the pursuit of truth in men of the type of Joad should continue, and should they be *determined* to reach the *goal*, there is every hope that they will attain to the truth of all the truths of religions and sciences, the truth of philosophy (*Satyasya satyam*), and that through *reason* or *intellect* (*Buddhi*).

Both Mr. Joad and Sir S. Radhakrishnan have by their

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brilliant, informing and invaluable publications on the philosophy of Religion, really rendered priceless service to the cause of truth, and the thinking world cannot be too grateful to them. They can never give too much of such thoughts to the world. Not that they have said the last word on such supremely serious subjects, but certainly they have provoked most serious thought in a manner that is really remarkable.



Our Forum

AN INDIAN ACADEMY

To

The Editor, *Triveni*, Madras.

Dear Sir,

I read with great interest the article entitled 'Why not an Indian Academy?' by Dr. P. Guha-Thakurta in the July-August 1933 number of your esteemed paper which was subsequently reproduced in *The Hindustan Times* of Delhi. On perusing the article, I thought that it would attract the attention of the big literary men of the country who could come forward with their opinion and remarks in this matter. But, so far as I am aware, I do not remember any one paying any heed to the proposal excepting Mr. I. A. Chapman who wrote from some Indian State and which was published in *The Hindustan Times*. Hence I was very much pleased when I saw in the Nov.-December (1933) issue of your journal a discussion on the subject by Mr. S. P. Sarma of Madras. I was gratified to think that at least one individual of the South had bestowed a thought over it and I am contributing these lines to your paper in the belief that the flame of discussion already started should be kept alive.

It is really very strange that one should be clamouring for an Indian Academy and nobody will take notice of it. Dr. Guha-Thakurta was perfectly right when he said that it was a misfortune that one had to plead for something one ought to have. The necessity for such an institution cannot, to my mind, be over-emphasised. Judging from the literary output of Bengal alone, such a 'supreme intellectual tribunal' is a necessity to give stimulus to the struggling young literary artists of that province who are really famished for want of recognition and funds. But co-ordination between provinces is a greater necessity, as we do not know whether there is any great intellectual achievement in the Tamil, Andhra or Maharashtra countries in their own language. Thus language is a great barrier between the provinces, almost insurmountable in its nature. Hence I think that branches of the Academy should be established in each province which should

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be co-ordinated by a central office at Delhi or Calcutta. Each province should maintain its own language and collect specimens of excellent productions for the year. These will be sent to the central office from all parts of India and the Great Ten of the central office will appraise their value and apportion their merits. The central office must necessarily be run in English in the absence of a common language for the whole of India. The central office should assign the hall-mark of recognition to certain really meritorious works and arrange for their translation, if they consider that it can claim universal approbation. I am told that, in England, the Royal Academy sits in judgment over all paintings received through the length and breadth of the country and the painters who receive recognition at the hands of the Royl Academy flourish, both in reputation and in money.

As long as we cannot have a separate Academy for science or philosophy, we should bring together all great scientists or philosophers of our country within the fold of the Academy and should not, therefore, include only *belles-lettres* men.

Before I conclude, I would like once more to stress the necessity for the establishment of such an institution in our country in the interests of the culture and civilisation we boast of, and of which we are natural inheritors, being the present-day citizens of the world at large. I invite the great literary men, scientists, philosophers and other numerous readers of your journal to come forward with their suggestions and help in the building-up of the Indian Academy which is still in the dreamland of Dr. Guha-Thakurta.

189, Durgabari Lane
Meerut Cantt.
27th May 1934

Yours Truly,
ABANI NATH ROY.

Reviews

[We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French, and German. Books for review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.]

ENGLISH

India and Java (Greater India Society Bulletin No. 5). Part I (History), By Dr. Bijan Raj Chatterjee; Part II (Inscriptions), By Drs. Bijan Raj Chatterjee and Niranjan Prasad Chakravarti. Calcutta.

The Greater India Society, Calcutta, has to be congratulated on the publication of this useful bulletin relating to the history of India and Java. The first part is a revised edition of an earlier work entitled *Indian Culture in Java and Sumatra* (1927), ably prepared by Dr. Bijan Chatterjee who is an authority on subjects relating to Indonesia. In this part, the author has 'availed himself of his knowledge of the Dutch sources to revise and bring up-to-date the subject matter of the first edition'. And in this Prof. N. J. Krom's authoritative work, the *Hindoe Javaansche Geschiedenis*, has been particularly useful to him. In this edition we have three new chapters, viz., (1) Fall of the last Hindu kingdom of Java, (2) The Mahabharata and the Wayang in Java, and (3) Tantrism in Cambodia, Sumatra and Java. The second part is new and consists of Sanskrit inscriptions from Java, Sumatra and Borneo, 'lands of originally alien tongues and peoples but afterwards completely transfused by contact with the superior culture of India'. These inscriptions were collected by Dr. B. R. Chatterjee and have been edited and translated in this part by Dr. N. P. Chakravarti, Assistant Epigraphist to the Government of India. While a majority of these inscriptions come from Java (West Java, Central Java and Eastern Java) some hail from Borneo, the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.

Ancient Java possessed no history even as ancient India did not. As Dr. Vogel remarks, 'there is no account whatever of those mercantile and missionary relations between India and Java which have left such lasting traces in the culture

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of that island. In the whole gigantic literature of ancient India, both Sanskrit and Pali, there is but a single mention of Java, which occurs in the fourth *canto* of the *Ramayana*. The epigraphical records, which to a certain extent must supply the want of historiography, do not throw any light on the early relations between India and the Archipelago, with the exception of a few copperplate charters of the 'Chola Dynasty'. Since Dr. Vogel wrote there has been much research done on the subject, and the results of this as well as the earlier researches, though fruitful on the side of art and architecture, have much to tell us on the side of history also, as they have helped considerably to reconstruct the 'Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history' in the following manner stated herein briefly :—

Ptolemy (150 A.D.) calls Java 'Jabadie' or the island of barley. The earliest epigraphic records known are from Borneo which have been assigned to the fourth century A. D. They are in Sanskrit language while the script closely resembles the Pallava Grantha script of South India and of the earliest epigraphy of Champa and Kambuja. The next series of inscriptions, also in the Pallava Grantha script, are from West Java and have been assigned to 450 A. D. They refer to King Purnavarman of Taruma-nagara, an ancient city that has been located near Batavia. The visit of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien to Java, driven by storm, was in about 413 A. D., when the island knew very little of the Buddha's law. Indeed the introduction of Buddhism here was not earlier than 423 A.D., when a Kashmir prince, Gunavarman, took upon himself the glorious task of preaching that religion here. Later on he went to China. For three centuries since then we get no inscriptions, but Chinese annals however do the duty of history, for they tell us of a kingdom called *Lan-ga-su* in N. W. Java and of another called *Kalinga* in Central Java, while W. Java is almost forgotten. The first dated record however is found in Central Java, and comes from Janggal. It is a Saiva record dated Saka 654 (732 A. D.), speaking of sage Agastya's home in South India and is written in Pallava Grantha script while its language is ornate Sanskrit. In the next dated record discovered at Dinaya and bearing the date Saka 682 (760 A. D.) we find the local Kavi script while the language is still Sanskrit. Kavi gradually replaced the Pallava Grantha in Java. This record shows also that the cult of Agastya was prevalent in Java. In the last quarter of the eighth

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century A. D. the maritime kingdom of Srivijaya in Sumatra, whose rulers were the glorious Sailendras who followed Mahayana Buddhism, held sway over Central Java. The inscriptions of these Sailendras both in Central Java and in Sumatra are written in a North Indian script which is closely akin to the Pala inscriptions of Nalanda. Srivijaya was noted about this time as a famous seat of learning and as a centre of commerce, while the relations between the Palas of Magadha and the Sailendras were happy and cordial. The wonderful *stupa* of Borobudur and other lovely temples and sculptures of this period in Central Java testify to the high artistic taste of these Sailendras.

From an inscription dated 785 Saka (863 A. D.) written in Kavi, we get to know that Hindu princes who were devotees of sage Agastya won back Central Java from its Mahayanist overlords. The descendants of Agastya are said in this record to have settled in the isle. Of these Hindu kings of the restoration period we get to know of two, Daksha, who probably built the Prambanan group of temples, and Wawa. The latter was ruling over East Java and was administering Central Java with the aid of a governor. With the end of Wawa's reign we hear very little of Central Java.

Mpoo Sindok, a minister of Wawa, established a powerful kingdom in East Java and a dynasty of his own. The famous Erlangga (1035 A. D.) was the son of a princess of this dynasty. He was a patron of Kavi literature. It was in his time that the Mahabharata and the Ramayana were rendered into Kavi verse. Soon after his death the kingdom got divided into parts, one of which, the principality of Kediri, had famous rulers such as Varshajaya, Kamesvara and Jayabaya (1100-1155 A. D.) under whose patronage the Kavi works such as Sumanasantaka, Krishnayana, Smara-dahana, Harivamsa, Bharata-yuddha etc., were composed and under whose vigilance trade flourished, Javanese boats plying between Madagascar on the west and the Chinese coast on the east. In the first part of the 13th century Ken Arok conquered Kediri, made himself the master of Singasari and creating a kingdom of that name made it the most powerful state in Java. This happened in 1220 A.D. Krtanagara, (1268-92 A.D.) the fourth in descent from him, was ambitious and attempted a conquest of Borneo, Bali and Sumatra, but was killed in battle by the chief of Kediri. Vijaya, the son-in

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law of Krtanagara, founded in 1294 A.D., the kingdom of Majapahit. His daughter, Jayavishnuvardhani, who succeeded him began the conquest of the Archipelago in 1343 A. D., while her son Hyam Wuruk, who came to the throne in 1350 A. D. expanded the kingdom of Majapahit considerably. From two Kavi chronicles, the *Nagarkrlagama* and the *Pararaton*, the former of which was composed in the court of Hyam Wuruk himself, we learn that the kingdom of Majapahit extended to New Guinea on the east and to the Philippine islands on the north, while Srivijaya, Kedah, Singapore, etc., were included in the list of dependencies. As for religion and art of this period we get to know that both Buddhism and Hinduism were patronised by the King and that Javanese art, 'best studied in the temple of Panataran, was coming more and more under Polynesian influence'.

After Hyam Wuruk, the kingdom decayed and a princess of Champa, wife of Krtavijaya, one of the last rulers of Majapahit, favoured Islam (1448 A. D.) with the result that Sumatra, Java and the Malay peninsula were being gradually brought over to Islam. While tradition attributes the fall of the kingdom to Vijaya V, who died fighting the Muslims in 1478 A. D., recent research would seem to suggest that 'it was a Hindu prince, Ranavijaya of Kediri, who dealt the death-blow to Majapahit in 1478 A. D.' and in 1513 A. D. we find the Hindu king of Java seeking Portuguese alliance.

The work under review is a valuable contribution on the subject of the history of India and Java, which no student of the subject can do without. The authors have done their respective tasks very ably and in a manner that does credit to their scholarship and wide learning.

T. N. RAMACHANDRAN

Indian Women and Art in Life.—By Kanaiyalal H. Vakil, B.A., LL.B. (D. B. Taraporewala Sons & Co., Bombay. Price, Rs. 2.)

This is, in the main, a reproduction of Mr. Vakil's address on Indian art delivered at the Bombay session of the All-India Women's Conference some years ago. Mr. Vakil is an enthusiastic advocate of certain phases of present-day Indian art, particularly as it obtains in Bombay and Western India. He contends that the art movement in India

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has, for too long, been the concern of 'exclusive coteries' of worshippers who fail to see the intimate connection between art and the daily life of the nation. According to him, attention ought to be diverted from the archaic and the antique in Indian art, to the actual work of the rising artists in every province. And they must be freed from the trammels of convention. Art should pervade every department of the nation's life as it once did,—beautify our homes and surroundings, our fashions in dress, and our festive gatherings. In all this, the women of India can play a great part. 'The women of India, if they so determine, can assist substantially art in India towards its reconstructive, or rather progressively positive, phase of vitality and growth. They can stop its provincial and ego-centric decadence and raise it to its legitimate status, not less international than interprovincial.' The book is beautifully got up and illustrated with examples of Indian painting, sculpture, and dance.

Mr. Vakil's antipathy to Mr. E. B. Havell and his disciples in Bengal amounts almost to an obsession. Like King Charles's head, it turns up on every page and detracts from the value of an otherwise excellent book.

K. R.

SANSKRIT.

Manameyodaya.—A primer on *Mimamsa* by Narayana Bhatta. Text in Devanagari, with English Translation, Introduction and Notes: By Dr. C. Kunhan Raja and Mr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, M.A., B.Sc., Readers in Sanskrit and Philosophy, Madras University. (The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Price, Indian Edition Rs. 5; Foreign Edition Rs. 6).

The *Manameyodaya* is an excellent manual on the theory of knowledge and ontology of the Bhatta School of *Mimamsa*. Though there are many small works treating of the *Mimamsa*, there are very few which succinctly and clearly set forth the philosophy of the *Mimamsa* system; and for this one has to go to the elaborate and difficult works like the *Sloka Vartika* of Kumarila and the *Tarka-pada* of *Sastra-dipika* or to the works on Advaita, on the principle that the Advaitins mainly follow Kumarila in this respect, '*Vyavahare Bhuttanayah*'. It is very praiseworthy of the Editors to have made this work

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available for the non-Sanskrit-knowing students of Indian Philosophy.

The work consists of two parts, the first dealing with the means of valid knowledge written by Narayana Bhatta, well-known Malabar poet and philosopher of about the latter half of the 16th century, and the second dealing with the categories written by a scholar of the same name. The treatment of the subject is in the classic style of stating the principles in brief *karikas*, then expounding them, discussing and refuting the views of other schools in prose comments. The different topics are comprehensively dealt with in lucid language without any of the cumbersome elaboration of the scholasticism of the 16th and subsequent centuries.

The English translation of the work is accurate and reliable, and the language simple and flowing. The translation is conveniently printed at the bottom of each page for easy reference. The value of this critical edition is greatly enhanced by the detailed table of contents, comparative table of *Pramanas* and categories, lists of doctrinal differences, glossary of words, and brief notes at the end which further elucidate the more difficult and obscure points. It is surprising to find such a model edition as this should have, like the one in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, omitted to give an index of the *karikas* occurring in the text. The *karikas* in the present text are not even numbered!

A. SANKARAN, M.A., Ph.D.

The Bhamati of Vachaspati-Chatussutri.—Edited with an English Translation by Mr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, M.A., B.Sc and Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, M.A., D.Phil., Readers in Philosophy and Sanskrit, Madras University. With a Foreword by Sir S. Radhakrishnan. (Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar).

The *Bhamati* of Vachaspati is the reputed and learned commentary of the versatile philosopher, Vachaspati-misra on the *Sariraka Bhashya* of Sri Sankara and represents the basic work of one of the three schools that arose as followers of Sri Sankara's *Advaita*, viz., the *Bhamati Prasthana*. The present text of the *Bhamati-Chatussutri* forms the most important portion of the work that is ordinarily studied by all traditional students of *Advaita* and it is now presented for

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the first time to the non-Sanskrit-knowing students of Indian Philosophy with an English Translation, Introduction and Notes.

The text adopted here is the same as that of the Srirangam edition, but the editors have also utilised two other manuscripts of the Adyar Library and have adopted some readings from them, wherever they were found preferable e.g., on p. 49 where *pravartante* is preferred to the singular *pravartate*, which is the reading in all printed editions. Though the adoption of this reading violates the elementary principle of sentence-construction viz., that a pronoun that is the subject of a sentence must have for its antecedent only the subject of the previous sentence and not the object, yet there is justification for the reading in that it makes the meaning clearer and is in greater consonance with what follows.

The Editors have had the benefit of suggestions and criticism from Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri, but on p. 122, the reading of an important quotation from the Nyaya Sutra 'Budhi siddham tu tad asat' properly identified by the learned Professor is wrongly read by the Editors with a negative particle as in the printed books, even though the emendation has the support of the *Kalpataru* and is warranted also by the context. The Editors in their explanatory notes at the end discuss the merits of the two readings but have exercised their discretion wrongly in preferring the bad reading, resorting indiscriminately to the law of parsimony, unmindful of the demands of the context.

However the text as presented here is genuine. The translation has been made with the utmost care and is true to the original. Considering the difficulties of the *Bhāmatī* text, it must be said that the translators have made an achievement worthy of any scholar. The even more scholarly part of the work is to be found in the learned Introduction and the brilliant Notes at the end of the work. In the former are clearly set forth the distinctive tenets of the Vachaspati School, Vachaspati's indebtedness to Mandana and his differences with other commentators, particularly Padmapada, the author of the *Panchapadika*. There are also occasional comparisons with the views of Western philosophers which will be of great interest to the modern student. It may be noted in passing that the Editors' criticism of the doctrine of Jivanmukti as illogical is not convincing, though in this

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matter, it may be mentioned, they have the support of a great dialectician of *Advaita*, Gouda Brahmananda Sarasavati. In the scholarly Notes are elucidated historical, textual and doctrinal points which could not be made clear in a mere translation. (e.g., see notes 22, 27, 31, 51, 54, 65, 119, 132, 137, 138, etc.). These notes are quite essential or we may even say that they are much more necessary and useful than a mere translation for the proper understanding of philosophical treatises bristling with technicalities which are likely to lead astray the scholar of limited or one-sided knowledge. As examples, may be cited *Prakaranlara* (p. 297) and *Niyoga* or *Apurva* (p. 303). The notes are very copious and full, revealing the superior scholarship of the Editors and their great attention, care and eagerness to make the work as well understood as possible.

The printing and get-up of the book are excellent. The learned Editors have, by this publication, rendered distinguished service to Indian philosophical studies and have earned the gratitude of all students of Indian Philosophy.

A. SANKARAN, M.A., Ph.D.

TELUGU

Andhra Ritu-Samkaram.—By G. V. Subrahmanyam, B. A. (Andhrapatrika Office, Madras. Price As. 8.)

'It is for love of the beautiful that I have translated Kalidasa's poem, not from pride of scholarship', says the author. But scholarship in Sanskrit and Telugu is as much in evidence here as love of beauty. His style is a happy blend of the Sanskrit *samsa* and sweet Telugu idiom.

The *Ritu-Samhara* is believed to be the earliest of Kalidasa's poems : in it are seen the first sproutings of that love of Nature which flowered into perfection in his later works. Mr. Subrahmanyam calls attention to this development and proves it by apt quotations. Translation of a poet like Kalidasa is indeed more difficult than original production in Telugu, as the reader is excessively critical at every turn, and inclined to disparage the efforts of a mere modern. Mr. Subrahmanyam has done his work with considerable skill. He deserves the encomiums showered on him by the Press, and by Mr. K. Nageswara Rao in his Introduction.

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We wish the author a brilliant literary career, for he has begun well.

K. R.

Hampi Kshetramu.—By Kodali Venkata Subba Rao, B.A. and K. Sivayogananda Rao. (K. Sivaramakrishna Rao, Andhrapatrika Office Madras. Price As. 10.)

This great work of the late lamented Subba Rao (along with his uncle Sivayogananda Rao) represents the flowering of his genius and patriotism. That 'style is the man' is amply illustrated throughout these poems. The rough exterior of Subba Rao tempered by his innate charm and affection attracted his friends while he lived; so too does his poetry now. The poet standing on the ruins of Hampi, and recalling in a picturesque and thrilling manner the departed glories of the city, gives us a vivid glimpse into the past. There is life and energy in every line, and surpassing wealth of imagination. Thought and language are so well poised, that the poet may be deemed to have set at rest the conflict of theories about form and substance in poetry. Historic personages like Vidyaranya, Rama Raya and Tirumala are portrayed in a unique manner; Subba Rao does not hesitate to describe Tirumala Raya as a coward while historians generally prefer to be silent.

'Nirankusah Kavayah' ('Poets are unshackled') was the reply given to me once by Subba Rao when I pointed out to him the use of certain words and of incorrect prosody. Even in these poems we find colloquial expressions, but they enhance the beauty of the whole, and in every instance they have a special significance, justifying the above reply.

Inscrutable are the ways of God. Just at a time when Subba Rao was winning recognition as a poet of rare promise, he was snatched away. It was left to his friend and colleague Mr. Viswanatha Satyanarayana, M.A. to collect the poems and give the poet a chance of eternal life.

C. J.

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Arvacheen Marathi Vangmay Sevak: G. D. Khanolkar.—(Bombay, Price Rs. 2-4.)

Mr. Khanolkar's handbook on modern Marathi writers fulfils a long-standing need of a good reference book of modern Marathi authors, and the very fact that it has at once been recognised as a standard book on the subject must speak of this volume a great deal. An alphabetical index of the names of the more prominent writers is an useful addition.

Vihangam: Editor, Y. M. Phatak, Congress Nagar, Nagpur.—(Monthly. Rs. 3 a year.)

Vihangam is a bright young thing in Maharashtra's growing and popular journalistic ventures. It is a very good miscellany of light and serious Marathi literature and most young writers have found their way into this journal. The controversy regarding payment to writers is interesting and one would like to know how Maharashtra's writers and publishers are going to solve it. The journal, one is told, is a new venture and the first of its kind in the Central Provinces. But Mr. Phatak must try to improve the exterior of his magazine and give up using the rather unnecessary and meaningless display of types and ink in his pages. For one thing, such a process hurts the eye of the reader, and artistically it is absurd. Nor must Mr. Phatak encourage the publication of third-rate amateurish sketches in pen and ink and the display of cheap cinema illustrations which, one is afraid, definitely spoil the general get-up of a good publication.

R. L. RAY

KANNADA

Matagali Mattu Itara Kathegalu.—By 'Ananda'. (Bangalore, Rs. 0-12-0).

This is a fine collection of five short stories written by 'Ananda', one of our distinguished short story writers. It is accompanied by a brilliant foreword from 'Srinivasa', the godfather of the short story and of many other things in Kannada. There is also a panegyrical lyric by Mr. D. R. Bende forestalling the text.

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'Ananda's' short stories have always a minuteness and perfection of technique, a chiselled grace and chastity of language, an even and enchanting flow of narrative which it is hard to find anywhere else. There is a lyrical sweetness inherent in the theme and the treatment, which renews the beauty of many of his stories every time.

Technically considered, all the five stories are stories of incident. This is not to say that they belong to a smaller category. A story of character is not better than a story of incident simply because it is a story of character. There is much more of characterisation in Shakespeare's romantic comedies of incident than in Ben Jonson's 'eccentric' comedies of character. The thing to be grasped is the *life* that the starting-point of incident or character yields to the writer. And there is immense life in each of these stories. It almost spreads its mantle over the technique itself.

The stories are beautiful because of this mantle of life which they wear with grace. They have also misled certain critics of their technique on this account. 'The Girl I Murdered' and 'Life' are not stories of character. The *Baswi*, the courtesan and the other characters are only types made to live for the moment in order to display the essential glamour which the situations had for the writer. This is done so well that the types are almost individualised; and we are also made to look beyond the incident and the characters to the society which is full of problems similar to those depicted in the stories. In 'A letter from his wife', sympathetic humour and subtle irony are made to enliven the charming situation. Though 'The enchantress' is intensely and predominantly lyrical in its psychological details, it would not have been a short story but for the final hint that the lady of his dream was the heroine of a fine painting. 'The Horseman in the sky' is a fine adaptation of a famous American short story with the same title.

'Ananda' has an artist's vision of life; he has also the artist's gift of expression.

V. K. GOKAK



From Omer Khvam

THE FRONTISPIECE BY MR. A. R. CHUGHTAI ILLUSTRATES
THE FOLLOWING QUATRAIN:

*In this Universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy nilly flowing :
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.*

KHAYYAM

*. . . he that laboureth right for loss of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!*

—The Song Celestial

‘East and West in Religion’

By T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI, C.I.E.

The volume before us is a collection of addresses by our illustrious countryman, Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan.¹ All except the last were delivered to Western audiences and yet they are as full of lessons for the East as for the West. They touch on a variety of topics. They are in the free flowing style which we have learnt to associate with the author's written and *extempore* discourses to popular audiences. No student interested in the study of religion and its many phases in the East and in the West should miss or overlook it.

The first topic is comparative religion. Comparative religion is a profitable study. It is not however for all. It is not for the ardent devotee of any one religion. It may interest scientific minds that view religion from outside as a sociological phenomenon. It may even interest deeply religious minds of a certain type. It cannot interest those to whom the final truth is given by their own religion and there can be nothing gained by a study of the various forms in which the religious mind has expressed itself in different parts of the world. That there may be many approaches to truth and that what may be missed in one might have found expression in another will not be allowed by those who rest on final and infallible revelations, to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away.

Those who can allow the value of comparative religion in the interests of religion itself must be able to say to themselves :

‘Truth is one. Truth is infinite and has many facets. Not all of it can be seen in all its bearings by any one of woman born. The age and clime in which a

¹ ‘*East and West in Religion*’ by S. Radhakrishnan, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London).

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person is born, the country and community to which he belongs and his own inner equipment and calibre set limits to the facets of truth that he can see. Even the mystics who claim to see the Truth, whole and entire, show a variety in their vision. Humility and wisdom alike enforce a due sense of our limitations in the perception of truth.'

This sense and the tolerance of temper which it enforces towards those who differ are not easy to persons who are deeply attached to their own religion as the final expression of religious truth. The thoroughly organised, aggressive, propagandising monotheistic religions have little room for tolerance. They were, in the not very distant past, so anxious to save the souls of men from the hell fires of the next world that they saw nothing wrong in flaying them alive in this. But even in these days when 'our spiritual good manners' have been vastly improved, the intolerance is carefully kept out of sight but is not wholly absent. The aggressive propaganda of the past has yielded place to what is described as the sharing of the good message with others less fortunately circumstanced. Occasionally, very occasionally, is impatience allowed to be seen. The desire to uplift the heathen is still there. In their minds it is all giving and no receiving. They have everything to teach and nothing to learn.

Two recent experiences brought it clearly to my mind. In the International Fellowship there was a suggestion, by an Indian Christian secretary, of a 'federation of religions.' However imperfectly expressed, the idea was clear that the higher minds of all religions should unite and put forth their combined effort in working for definite ends. The assertion of equality involved in the suggestion and the implication of mutual influence immediately roused opposition. At another concourse of friends, a missionary asserted that there was an idea that all religions at bottom were one and had a common source, but to his mind, speaking wholly impartially, it seemed impossible to sustain it. (It reminded me of the mild ironical satire of Kalidasa in making the dancing master say

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that it was natural that each man should think highly of his own *vidya*, but was he in that category when he claimed for dancing a premier place among arts?) But with great urbanity he stopped all controversy by adding that so it seemed to him and it was not his desire to discuss or raise a controversy.

It is possible to maintain that East and West are different in their ways. It is possible to show parallelisms in matters of religion in East and West and maintain that, despite apparent differences, they are essentially alike and under stress of similar circumstances have produced similar conceptions and solutions. It is possible nevertheless to contrast them. Religion in the East largely is the cultivation of inner life. Religion in the West is connected with life in the community, with churches and congregations. Neither statement is intended to be taken as literally and wholly true. But in a rough manner of speaking it is intended to express the idea that the East and the West lay more stress on the individual and the social aspect of religion. For some time, and more vividly since I read this volume, it is increasingly borne in upon me that

*andham tamah pravisanti
ye vidyam upasate
Tato bhuya iva te tamo
ya u vidyayam ratah
Anyad evahur vidyaya
(a) nyadahur avidyaya
Iti Susruma dhiranam
Ye nastad vichachakshire
Vid�am chavidyam cha
yastad vedobhayam saha
Avidyaya Mrityum tirtwa
Vid�ayanritam asnute.*

'Blind darkness enter they that do homage to *Avidya*. Even greater darkness enter they that are attached to *Vidya*. From *Vidya* one result flows and from *Avidya* another. So

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we hear from the wise who expounded it to us. Whoso knows *Vidya* and *Avidya* together, he crosses death by *Avidya* and wins the immortal by *Vidya*.

Vidya is knowledge, the inner realisation of the truth. *Avidya* is, by contrast, activity. *Vidya* belongs to the world of the inner spirit. *Avidya* belongs to the world of action, life in the community. Without *Vidya*, action lacks informing purpose, and is ill-directed and ineffective. *Vidya* without action is worse. Action uninspired by true aim may yet achieve something if not very much. Knowledge of true aim can achieve nothing without action under its guidance. Ignorance may have its excuses. Knowledge has responsibility and no excuse for its deficiencies in the ordering of life. Knowledge and action yoked together will win the highest. Apart, they fail of effect.

You close your eyes and try to realise what the ideal means to you. You open your eyes and look at the world around. You do not find it the embodiment of your dream. You speak to the stranger and ask him for his dreams. He explains. You tell yourself that dreamer's world must be a poor thing at the best, at any rate far inferior to your own. You go into his world and find it is not so bad; in fact it is better in some, in many, respects. The world of the active social worker is not perfect but the world of the pure idealist is even less perfect. With more active endeavour in the one case and with greater insight in the other, far greater results may be reached.

It is possible to have an excess of a good quality or rather it is possible to misapply a good principle. It is possible to have too much patience, too much tolerance. A little impatience, a little intolerance, not with men but with abuses, may be useful. If steady unremitting effort to remove them is impatience and intolerance, much impatience and intolerance is required. In the name of tolerance we have left ignorance alone. We have left superstition alone; we have left squalor and misery and uncleanness alone; we have made no effort to eradicate them. We have avoided dissemination of correct ideas

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as a possible source of disturbance to the internal and external peace of men and society. We quote in defence '*Na buddhi-bhedam janayet*' etc. It was not always thus that we thought. We carried our message and our light even into other countries, not indeed on the point of the bayonet, but in the full faith that it is inherent in the quality of light that it should sooner or later attract all human minds towards itself. Intolerance has to be avoided, but is there no escape from 'the doubtful result that all sorts of foreign cults and superstitious beliefs are to be found within the pale of our religion'? 'Doubtful result' is a mild description of the chaos we allow without any effort to check it. That some of our best men should not only not put their religious household in order but, in what they conceive, to be defence of true Hinduism, be driven to maintain that a large section of the Hindu population is not Hindu at all in religion, is the measure of our toleration and acquiescence in this doubtful result.

We have become suspicious of reason. We must not think, we must not reason. We must simply obey. All the thinking has been done long ago and crystallised into texts. The wisdom of the ages is there. We must only interpret and obey them. And the orthodox custodians of the science and art of exegesis should in each generation find confirmation for their practices and prejudices, however they might vary from generation to generation. You need fresh thought and intense effort to realise it.

That which distinguishes man from the brute is his capacity 'to look before and after and pine for what is not.' It is not pining and languishing and dying, but pining and therefore working for and creating what is not, that the poet has in mind. The *Tapas*, intense creative effort, is in the old stories described as generating heat invading the three worlds and disturbing even the gods out of their repose.

Throughout the book there are striking thoughts strikingly expressed. They do not deal merely with religious topics in the abstract; they deal with topics of everyday life and

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with present day problems, and with facts and results of deep varied human experience.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan is a master in the art of presenting even familiar facts in such striking language that they acquire a new significance and power of moving the human mind. The mind of the Hindu community has to be moved, and the faith that moves mountains and overcomes all obstacles has to be generated. Thinkers of the author's type have a part in the creation of this new faith. There is ample evidence in the recent utterances and activities of Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan that he is not oblivious of his duty in this respect.

Nature-Sketch

An orange warmth of after-sunset floods
The darkening hills, and then the twilight-swoon
Comes gathering in with eve's unnumbered buds
Dimly-pulsating to the blossomed moon.

The after-silence of the last lone bird
Which twitters a pale drop of note and stops
The whole night long, is like a depth of word
Which from some lonely poet's being drops

Into an after-life of hush complete,
Or like a burning star of sound which comes
Out of the aeons like a twinkled beat
Drowned in the depths of dark milleniums.

Out of the silvern dark the ocean rolls :
Its billows to my visioned soul respond
How like a giant rhythm-roll of souls
Met at a festival of diamond.

There is a brooding silence in the air
Welled from the wingéd Farness on whose rim
Dawn-colours all invisibly prepare
Bright pinioned majesties of seraphim.

One cloud moves slowly yonder like a blotch
Of silver-edged gloom which seeks and seeks.
Here from my plot of earth I sit and watch
The night, the motherhood of glows and streaks.

How mighty is the universe ;—the sky,
The cloud, the star, the water and the night !
But mightier than each of these am I
Who do contain in me both dark and light.

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

Agony

'Tis agony
To hear a clock
Dripping out hours
Into Eternity,
Remorselessly
Killing Youth's flowers !

I am so young
And yet Time's cold
And iron tongue
Tells me I shall be old . . .

If every shriek
Killed in my brain
Abroad was hurled
Upon the world,
All men, aghast, would seek
The secret of my pain . . .

Man is no flower,
Simply to live,
Die in an hour,
But a weak fugitive . . .

'Tis agony
To hear a clock
Dripping out hours
Into Eternity,
Remorselessly
Killing Youth's flowers . . .

SANKARA KRISHNA CHETTUR

A Decade of Indian Politics

By M. CHALAPATHI RAU, M.A., B.L.

Edwin Samuel Montagu laboured like a mountain and produced the Montford reforms. He, like everybody else, knew that Diarchy died the day it was born, though the *post mortem* examination was carried on for nearly ten years, till Coroner Simon delivered the verdict that death was due to natural causes. But between them Chelmsford who was all vague and blue about the reforms, and Montagu who had the manners of a Hebrew conjurer, rallied and organised the Moderates, who in their turn discarded Morley and adopted Montagu as their latest hero. Lord Reading with his shrewdness touched these Moderate leaders of public opinion and turned them into shapes of statesmen ; they crowded into the Councils and became Ministers, Executive Councillors, and members of minor commissions. The Congress, however, stuck to Gandhi and his experiments with truth ; and it was not until C. R. Das made a bold bid for power and divided the Congress at Gaya that the Swarajists entered the legislatures. The death of C. R. Das in the summer of 1925 was a first-rate national tragedy, for he had charmed his countrymen by his dash and animation, his soulful idealism, and his ruthless self-sacrifices. His patriotism was highly poetic and heroic, and his brilliant record as leader is yet unbeaten.

It was left for Motilal Nehru to dominate the best part of the decade. He was a prince among politicians ; and though he had not the almost coercive charm and power of Das, he had a charm of his own and political astuteness of a high order. He had wrought a remarkable revolution in his life, exchanging the luxury of epicureanism for the luxury of stoic suffering. It was he that had helped Das in driving out Gandhi into the wilderness, and it was he that dragged him out again. He had qualities which contradicted one another. He could be amiable and autocratic, charming

and ferocious, could win over a wavering ally or kick out a recalcitrant follower with equal ease. He was at times bad tempered and Byronic, unable to brook opposition, and like most other leaders of the people, democratic in opinion but aristocratic by temperament. His affection for his family was proverbial ; he had varied tastes ; he loved pomp and hospitality ; his pride was princely. It was as Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly that he shone at his brightest. He united brilliant social gifts with an iridescent intellect. The rare and delicate dignity, the elaborately enacted cynicism, the restraint and elegance and resistless logic, the power of illustrating argument with picturesque anecdotes or adorning it with brilliant epigrams, all captivated men with the least belief in that mockery of a legislature and secured for that "bastard constitutionalism" its fullest trial. That he was not more effectual did not matter to him or to his countrymen ; he invested the Assembly with his own pomp and majesty and imparted a touch of drama to the dullest of debates. Nor did he lack in striking attitudes ; he made history by moving the National Demand in 1924, a heroic gesture which could have been heroically answered. But Sir Malcolm Hailey, the clever and eloquent Home Member, preferred to parry and quibble : and the glorious opportunity of gaining the confidence of the people's representatives was lost for ever.

Pandit Motilal Nehru showed generalship for the first time in the history of the Congress. The Simon Commission boycott and the All-Parties Conference were engineered with conspicuous skill and success. Under the most thrilling circumstances he made the Assembly fling the Commission in the face of Parliament. He co-operated admirably with Sapru and Jinnah who felt their self-respect had been outraged, for Birkenhead had ignored them, not as the Buddhists ignore God but as the biting dog ignores the fleas on its back. The Nehru Report drawn up by the All Parties Conference was an unparalleled success. It outlined a constitution, appealing in its simplicity and comprehensiveness.

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It proved by figures that the Muslims had nothing to fear from general electorates in the Punjab and Bengal. For the first time the problem of the Princes was dealt with frankly and courageously. Nehru and his associates drew up a report which was, unlike other reports, readable ; that was why educated men could grasp and understand, remember and discuss it. It was a model report ; the analysis of things masterly ; the statistics relevant and to the point ; and it was, as far as the people were concerned, a better seller than the Simon Report. Nehru became a slogan, his report a nation's poster ; and for a time there was a country-wide unity. But soon there were dissensions and a reaction against the dominance of Nehru. The situation seethed with fatal incongruities. One saw the curious spectacle of Mr. Satyamurti, the stentor of the Congress, loudly welcoming the Report one moment and as loudly repudiating it the next. Mr. Jinnah preferred to be wagged by his party and was indifferent from the beginning. Mahomed Ali with his streak of mysticism, and Shaukat Ali who talked as if he were the heavy-weight champion of politics, were vehemently against it. The Viceroy's attitude was somnolent and exasperating. There was nothing left for the Congress but to drift towards vigorous agitation and even direct action ; it delivered its ultimatum at Calcutta, and entered the battle-field at Lahore. Motilal Nehru had to give up his constitutionalism after a desperate trial. He had seen the Government sanction repressive legislation in the teeth of the bitterest opposition, unwanted commissions and committees tour the country at the behest of the Secretary of State and at great cost to the tax-payer, the opinion of the Assembly flouted again and again and its resolutions treated with utter disdain. He had moved the National Demand with moderation but without success. He had met the Government half-way without any response. He was disillusioned and could not stand against the combined disillusionment of his followers. He had now to choose more dangerous but more reliable weapons. He could not have lagged behind his followers a

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moment longer, and it was evident that India loves All-Parties conferences as little as England loves Coalitions.

History held out the prospect of something more heroic than mere reforms, and Coatman becomes as readable as Rushbrook Williams. It was rather fashionable at one time, even for Congressmen, to praise the shilly-shallying somnambulist statesmanship of Lord Irwin. They must all be wiser now. Lord Irwin had no doubt the episcopal earnestness of the model curate, but it was neither powerful nor convincing enough; and it is not high moral grandeur to spill milk and then have the courage to cry over it. If he had not the pomposity of Curzon nor the coldness of Reading, he neither showed the thorough mastery of the one nor the unbending will of the other. He time and again vacillated when he ought to have decided and acted; and, given the same conviction and purpose, Reading would have more successfully conducted the peace negotiations. We are also impelled to think that India and Indian nationalism have gained more from first-class brains like Curzon who gave life to a soulless administration, or Reading who imparted vigour and toughness to the bureaucracy, than the moral geniuses like Ripon who gave a bit of municipal reform or Irwin who gave the parson touch to the politician's business. The virtues which distinguished Irwin from other Viceroys were that he added sermons to his ordinances, avoided unnecessary ceremony, and allowed himself to be fascinated by the strange personality of Mahatma Gandhi; but India will always mournfully associate his Viceroyalty with what Mr. Guedella would call 'the Rain of Law.'

Congressmen refused to 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.' They attacked the salt tax, the least sinister of taxes, but the most harassing to the sentiment of the people. Irwin consented to play the part of a minor Nero. The Congress was broken up. The Press was gagged. The public were asked not to picket. Men were afraid of talking politics together, of wearing khaddar caps, of sulking about shops. A docile Assembly approved all that the

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Viceroy decreed. Mr. Robert Bernays who 'approached India without any previous convictions' and who, catching the fever of the moment, wrote that Motilal Nehru was 'extremely handsome, almost beautiful, with his long white beard' and that the 'Hindu Mahasabha is a revolutionary youth movement from Madras,' watched lathi charges from the lawns of the Bombay Gymkhana club, drinking cocktails. We are much indebted to him for his contemporary record that the lathi was 'a bamboo stick, thick enough to inflict serious injuries': the description is as good as a definition. The Congress has been prepared for jails and gun-shots but not for this cold-blooded wood, which wounded without killing. The situation was Hogarthian. There were comic interludes. Some magistrates constituted themselves the Mussolinis of their districts and tried to suppress even caps. Provincial Governments imitated the ineptitude of the Central Government. The national agitation wavered between climax and anticlimax. Lord Irwin sat fiddling whenever he was not issuing ordinances. Petty officers distinguished themselves by their excesses behind the backs of protective Home Members. Repression reigned in the guise of law and order. Martial law reached its limits in Sholapur. At Borsad women were said to have been forcibly dispersed, seized by their hair and kicked by boots. The country was bubbling and in high spirits. But the situation was called a stalemate and there were hurried negotiations. The 'half-naked fakir' and the unostentatious Christian gentleman entered into one of the most ambiguous and pragmatic of pacts. Sarojini Devi, the Madame de Staél of the Congress, who had given up her glamorous poetry for gorgeous patriotic prose, described them as 'the two Mahatmas.' The heroic suffering of a year was nullified, and Irwin went home with the reputation of a statesmen. The death of Motilal Nehru on the eve of the Pact was a disaster to Britain and India; for he would have gone to the second Round Table Conference and helped it to come to sensible and lasting conclusions. Gandhi as usual behaved like the Pope of

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politics and issued his powerful encyclical. The conference was a tragic waste of time and energy ; and it was for the Congress the biggest tactical blunder when the country was precipitated into civil disobedience for the second time.

The White Paper has been torn to pieces ; it only remains to burn it ; but it sums up the achievements of the Round Table Conferences. We must here celebrate for a while the remarkable astuteness of Sir T. B. Sapru. He showed, at a critical time, something of the political sagacity of Cavour, though it was unfortunate that he did not possess Cavour's phenomenal craft or courage. All the delegates, the pink and cream of moderatism, the politicians with pre-fixes and suffixes, went to London and flopped about like Gullivers in Brobdingnag, but none of them had a mind of his own. The one politician who had thought out the whole problem saw himself and the other delegates in the roles of Alexander Hamilton and his fellow federalists. The flies all walked into Sapru's parlour. It was a threefold trap. Sapru and his associates wanted provincial autonomy and some kind of responsibility at the centre ; the Princes, still smarting under the Butler Report, saw a chance of getting rid of the tyranny of political agents 'n one hand and agitators on the other ; the British Government was prepared to concede a certain quantum of responsibility at the centre with the Princes as bulwarks of Imperialism. That was the pathology of the process, apart from the ethics of it. Mr. Vijayaraghavachari and Mr. Jinnah have opposed the idea of Federation from the beginning, but they were voices in the wilderness and could not stand against the almost carnal obsession for Constitutions with 'unrealised preambles' and mammoth schedules. Mr. Sastri gave up the conviction of a life-time and meekly surrendered. Under the strong wing of the Empire, they thought, they could experiment and concoct a mixture. None of them could have ignored all the implications of such a scheme, a federation between autonomies to be created by statute and autocracies hedged in by treaties, with a heritage of legalism, formalism, and conservatism.

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The first Round Table Conference was like the grand premiere of a musical comedy ; the second was a costly show; the third was a benefit performance. Ramsay MacDonald lent the services of his platitudinous gestures and sugary sentiment. Winston Churchill, still 'on the waiting list of England's Mussolinis,' has described the proceedings with his deadly wit ; though, luckily for all, his bombastic impertinences have bored an audience which does not appreciate rhetoric that scintillates but does not persuade and convince. Mr. Jinnah, the most baronial of our politicians, promised to blow up the whole show, but he had chosen the role of a prophet, and except for suggesting the classic grace and pomp of George Arliss, he did nothing. And retired pro-consuls like Craddock pranced about and grew fussy. The whole scheme so far is a mule with 'no pride of ancestry and no hope of posterity' ; but if it becomes an accomplished fact we shall have to celebrate for ages the wisdom and folly of Hoare, Sapru, and Bikanir. Its most brilliant advocates used the now hackneyed annas simile ; they say it gives us twelve annas out of the rupee of responsibility and the chance to fight for the remaining four annas ; which all looks suspiciously like the 'half a loaf' philosophy in another form. What must be clear to all is that the Native States will be the pocket boroughs and the communal electorates the rotten boroughs which will return a surplus of reactionaries, so that it will be well-nigh impossible even to move this Car of Juggernaut. The Viceroys and the Governors, at least in theory, will be autocrats without the benevolence of the Tudors or the magnificence of the Moghuls. There will be conflicts between industrial Provinces and agricultural Provinces, Hindu Provinces and Moslem Provinces. The United States of India will pull against each other like the States of the Balkan Peninsula ; and a Balkanized India will be a source of satisfaction to many. It will be divided against itself ; it will invite interference. The one possible answer to these charges is that there is no easier way out of the *impasse*, with a reactionary party in power and a Congress beaten to the

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knees, and above all our geography which reminds us we are a sub-continent, not a country, our history which reads like a wearisome doggerel, and the vast and baffling anachronism of the Princes.

The constitution of the Chamber of Princes was one of the most historic and significant events in the history of the Empire as well as the world ; for the first time autocrats and demi-autocrats amounting to a big crowd had an organisation and a House of their own and could meet and discuss together. It focussed attention on the age-old demand for a share of the Customs and a tribunal to decide justiciable disputes between the Princes and the paramount power, a demand for the minimum of equity but against the trend of constitutional practice as crystallized in the acts of paramountcy exercised by the Government. Sir Leslie Scott overloaded his plea with all the available powder, but the Butler Report blew up their hopes. Nor could they accept the faultless logic of the Nehru Report that the future government of India will succeed to the paramountcy when the country will have attained Dominion Status. They would be only too willing to join in any scheme if they are allowed a voice in the affairs of all-India, but they are not prepared to give all-India a voice in their affairs. Viceroys from Curzon to Willingdon have flattered them in the choicest language as links in a chain, as partners in a great task, as pillars in a great edifice. They have, however, their own fears, their doubts, and their forebodings. There is an open unrest even among them. The history of the present is too hazy, too slow, too unsettled, and it is yet too early to say whether the future of the Princes will be one-tenth as long as their past.

It is desirable to assess the political philosophy of some of the parties. 'Like other idealisms patriotism varies from noble devotion to moral lunacy,' says Dean Inge; and all the variations are to be found in our country. Some frankly do not believe in having such an encumbrance as a philosophy : they believe in the potency of the purse as long as there is money in it, and parties crop up on the eve of elections and

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reforms, leaders are hired, and fictitious followings created at a moment's notice. The communalists, whether organised or disorganised, are always a powerful factor, and make use of thundering mouthpieces, though there is more rhyme than reason in their politics and they change their colours oftener than a chameleon. There are the landowners, the millowners, and other influential commercial communities, European and Indian, who have been no less vocal in an era of eloquent noises; they have planned their policy in the belief that economics and not politics will always decide Britain's dealings with India; and they know too well that there is nothing so formidable as a vested interest pretending to be an intellectual conviction or principle.

Apart from these shifting interests and parties that rise and die like mushrooms, we have the Liberals and other Moderates on one side, and the Congress on the other. The Liberal leaders are charming statesmen. They parley with the Government one moment and with the Congress the next. They have chalked out a programme of perpetual vacillation and made an ideal of worm-eaten policies. Politics is the art of the possible, said Lord Morley, one of their apostles; and the world without the British Empire is to them simply impossible. Like Lord Halifax of the time of Charles II, they are boastful of their trimming, and we have the vile antithesis of a set of people living in a state of civilized slavery talking like free men. They enlighten nobody by their periodical discourses on the present discontents. This is a time when every party in the State must account for its existence; and taking all that the Liberals have said and done, it is unfortunate that this is a time when the Liberals, as Liberals, have no business to exist. Their political philosophy is summed up in the wise words of Sapru: 'I fight as a subject of King George, for a place in his household, and I will not be content with a place in his stables,' a lordly ambition recently answered with a place in the Privy Council, which may be kindly described as the curio-room of the British Empire.

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Unfortunately for the country, there are a considerable number of people who are driven to embrace Communism a little prematurely and get entangled in conspiracy cases, while others have recourse to the courage of despair and, like Homer's heroes, seem to prefer unnatural deaths. The Congress, on the other hand, sets up high ideals, passes brave resolutions, and wages a dilly-dallying war. The Civil Disobedience movement would have been wholly heroic if some lukewarm leaders had not been dragged into it like Don Quixotes to tilt at windmills. But everything has been overshadowed by the spirituality of Mahatma Gandhi, his endless patience and energy, and the intense incandescence of his spiritual suffering. He mirrors in his personality the utter distortion of all sorrow, the agony of crucifixion which transfigured the Son of Man into the Son of God. With his rise, leaders like Tilak became minor figures in the country's fight for freedom, and the past a prelude to his gigantic experiments; and as the situation grew intenser his personality sparkled the more intensely, and he caught the imagination of a highly intuitive people as the man of the times, keen-sighted, humorous, fanatical, a lawyer and a mystic, as frank as a child, and as inscrutable as a sphinx. He, more than any Round Table Conferences or earthquakes, has drawn worldwide attention and sympathy for the Indian problem; raised such an apparently harmless act as boycott to the dignity of a weapon of warfare, and even spread the belief that if the British were to withdraw tomorrow all the virgins and rupees would be quite safe. There is no more pride in aping English manners and accent. The bureaucracy, once suffering from a severe superiority complex, now feels almost boorish. Patriots are not pompous but humble. He has created a new technique for dealing with superior powers while throwing the blame on them; and, more than anything else, he has made suffering fashionable as surely as Bernard Shaw has made self-conceit fashionable. The Congress has been endowed with a measure of his own fervour and noble endeavour. That is why Congressmen cannot think of a

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better guide or philosopher. His spiritual grandeur overwhelms them. They remember only too well that it was Gandhi who rescued a farce and rewrote it into a Passion Play of tremendous power and pathos.

Gandhi is retiring but he has blessed Council-entry. It is ominous for the Congress as well as the Government. The entire people are suffering from nausea at the sight of a Congress burdened with too many cares and anxieties, and a Government stupid and soulless to the core. The most ignorant of them know that it is easier for a rich man to enter the gates of heaven than for an Indian to become a citizen in the Dominions; they know that they are Indianizing the Army and other Services at the pace of a snail. The country is dangerously at the cross-roads of socialism and capitalism, constitutionalism and anarchy, reaction and progress. Socialism is inescapable sooner or later for a country like India, and the ponderous fact remains that we must plan or perish. There is no more trust in the British Labour Party, which when it had power acted as though it had read and misunderstood Morley on Compromise. Everyone, including the diehard, knows that the discontent is divine and simmering, and that there is too much law and too little order; but with the Congress blotted out for a while the Government could be sympathetic or sinister at will. It is but natural that youth should cry to youth and blood answer blood, but the bright young people of England develop a righteous indignation against oppression of every kind, while they seem to be ignorant of even the existence of India. It is clear that the country must fall back on its own resources. The Congress has decided to repeat itself. We can understand this decision either as a revival of spontaneous affection for Council work or as a tactical move to fight on the only available front; though the sight of khadi-clad patriots puffing out their police-beaten chests and crowding into the legislatures might induce elegant speakers of the type of Mr. Jinnah to go on strike. Very few people, however, seem to think of the dangers that had overwhelmed men of better calibre. This time Gandhi

and the Congress consent to have a grip over the Swarajist section and keep it inspired and obedient to the inner voice of the people. It is safer to consider possible developments. At their best the Swarajist councillors cannot do better than what Das did in Bengal ; they might also hold a watching brief for detenus or secure butter-milk for C class prisoners ; they might safely utter sentiments which would be considered seditious outside the Councils. One other possible way of adding momentum to their force is to adopt unadulterated Parnellism, obstructing and opposing every step, using every weapon of insolence and invective ; but this in a powerless Parliament is not doing much. They might even accept office and wreck the bureaucracy from within. It is a vicious circle, vicious enough to demoralise the best of incorruptibles. Those who watched the Swarajists last time can easily recollect how some mouths watered for ministerships ; how men like Tambe had the courage of their convictions and became Executive Councillors ; how others in Madras tried to be minister-makers and made a mess of things. Some of the more youthful of them defied party commands and attended the 'socials' given by the wives of Members of the Government. Those questions will crop up again. The best that they could do is to revive the Nehru Report or the best part of it, instead of wasting time over All Parties Conferences and Constituent Assemblies.

We need not speak only as Congressmen or non-Congressmen ; or believe that patriotism is the monopoly of the Congress and sanity the monopoly of the Moderates. There are a large number of intellectual men, young and old, who have been mere pawns in the game, who have suffered directly in the spirit and indirectly in the flesh, and are now looking for a real leader and a real party. Jawaharlal Nehru speaks for them when he says : 'Our religion is one of the kitchen, of what to touch and what not to touch, of baths and top-knots, of all manner of marks, and fasts and ceremonies that have lost all meaning : our very gods are manufactured in the factories of England or Japan.' He is a leader after the

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country's heart, excitable, sententious, dogmatic. He is as intellectual as Tilak, as sincere and downright as Gandhi, as cold-blooded and logical as his father, with his own individual outlook and temper. Ready in action, vehement in speech, he represents, more than Gandhi, the youth and other popular elements in the country; and his mere existence is enough to inflame public opinion and endanger the safety of the Government. He is perhaps too heroic for the present day lumbering doggerel history. But as long as he is alive, he stands as a portent of illimitable power. There has been no such effective leader since the death of the great Desabandhu Das. But the leaders who stampeded the country into civil chaos are now panic-stricken and propose to stampede it into the councils. That the Congress should do this might seem a cowardly act. If the Congress cannot do anything else, it might at least take effective steps to kill this hydra-headed monstrosity, this patchwork constitution of a mob of Princes and motley Provinces, with self-government on the circumference and safeguards at the centre. If the Congress is not able to shape the circumstances even that much, it would be pitiable in the eyes of the public. It must be hoped that this time at least the Congress will not be led by the nose, and that a combination of circumstances and the emergence of a real leader will drive the old gang into the wilderness, so that at this time of unparalleled disillusionment nothing will stand between the people and their real representatives.

It will be interesting to see whether Bhulabhai Desai will succeed where Pandit Motilal Nehru failed. There is one hopeful factor: Desai will lead a compact host of tried warriors while Nehru led a mongrel crowd of responsivists, sanatanists, and lotus-eaters. The coming Assembly will not be as spectacular as the Third Assembly which was a splendid tournament of words, dominated by Nehru and presided over by Patel, but the Swarajists should be able to put up some solid opposition, if they will not indulge in mere sword-play. The Government may be left to supple-

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ment its sinister dual policy of doling out repression with one hand and reform with the other. It may or may not change its heart, for the State is said to be 'a corporation without a soul, and the ex parte Government of Lord Willingdon is one of the most soulless of Governments. Lord Willingdon, it is clear, is not a namby-pamby statesman like Lord Irwin. He has issued ordinances with wooden precision. He has declared his sympathies with less than usual vagueness. In his shrewdness and diplomacy, as in his appearance, he resembles not a little Richelieu and other Cardinal statesmen of the eighteenth century. He has for the moment succeeded; and *The Times* of London has recently written: 'No one is better equipped to deal with this sort of situation, and it would be a fitting climax to an Indian career of unprecedented length and variety that Lord Willingdon should be the Viceroy to start the new machine.' But it must take at least two years more to say whether Lord Willingdon will have been the first of the new 'constitutional' Viceroys or only the last of the Bourbons.

The Man of Culture

By M. K. CHAKRAVARTI, M.A., B.L.

It has been finely said that culture is the residue of knowledge which is left behind after most of the details have been forgotten. The residual knowledge is superior to the gross knowledge, in that it is tested by experience and criticism, and mellowed by reflection. In this view culture might seem to be almost a synonym of wisdom. Yet it is not so; for wisdom is rather the essential product of culture. Figuratively speaking, culture is the rich solution from which the tasteless, colourless, and odourless fluid of wisdom is distilled by some mysterious process of intellectual chemistry. The cultured man is therefore nearer our hearts than the wise man; we love the one but only revere the other.

The above is an attempt to describe culture, but not to define it. From the very nature of the thing, culture is too subtle and complex an idea to be properly defined. We can only suggest the rareness of its quality by parallels. It may sometimes strike us as the subtle fragrance of a great lady's gown folded and stowed away in the wardrobe for years, to be worn again at a grand reception. Or, to suggest a more academic parallel, perhaps culture is like the faint smell of faded rose-petals placed between the leaves of a favourite school-book, which is accidentally reopened after many years. Or, to take another illustration, culture is perhaps like the subdued colours and the softened feel of a costly Persian carpet or Kashmere shawl which has been used fairly long by a nobleman of taste. Nothing like it is to be found in the market even for thrice its price. Or perhaps culture is like the music of an old violin, once the property of an Italian or Polish artist, and now sold at a fancy price at an artistic auction sale. Violins of a better make and workmanship may perhaps be had in the market, louder, richer and clearer in timbre; but not another yielding equally

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mellowed tones. To take one last simile to complete the gamut of the senses, a cultured man may sometimes remind one of the flavour of the old wine of Burgundy or Portugal, preserved in the 'deep delved earth' for the life-time of a generation, at length to be served in honour of a distinguished guest. Like Shelley's 'Skylark' we know not what culture is, we can but suggest what things are most like it.

Culture is a rare thing; a rich gift by a fairy godmother. Thrice blessed is he on whom it is bestowed. Such a man will radiate joy, not necessarily for every one; but certainly for the 'sympathetic' few.

'We are the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time' says Tennyson. But the cultured man is not one who laboriously prepares an intellectual inventory of this great inheritance. That is the work of the dull historian or scholar of the race—the careful steward of the royal household; not of the prince royal, the heir to the throne. The truly cultured man is he who moves about with the easy grace and unconscious pride of owning the whole palace. There is something indefinable in his countenance and manners, even in his dress and movement, which clearly marks him off from all others. We somehow feel the presence of royalty in his person, although we cannot explain why.

We can see the luminosity of intellectual culture in every kind of master-craftsman; and it glows the warmer and brighter, the higher and more refined his medium of work, until we see it glow like a live-coal in a dark room in the spiritually cultured man, every part of whose being has, as it were, caught fire and become incandescent. Yet in every case it is inward radiance and not outward reflection. The opacity of the flesh is no bar to it, for it easily glows through a man's face. If we have the eye to see it, we shall see this glow of intellectual culture more or less in the face of the master-builder, the master-artisan or the master-goldsmith, as well as in the master-musician, painter, and scholar; in fact, of every person who has passed a certain stage in the struggle of the mind with matter.

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It is not necessary that this translucency of spirit should appear simultaneously in all the faculties of our mind and will. Sometimes it is confined to the one faculty which has been sufficiently exercised, e.g., a man's sense of humour; love of truth; sense of the beautiful; sense of the pathos of life; sense of values. It is rarely that the whole mass of man's mind is aglow with the light of culture.

The cultured man is so much like, yet so different from, others. It is this elusive quality of mind that makes him so interesting. He is not necessarily a towering personality like a mountain peak, at which we cannot look without our hats falling off. No, he is in many cases just an ordinary person like most of us. He is like one of those gods who had come to the *Swayamvara* of Damayanti, and looked for all the world like Nala. It required the observation of Damayanti to note the subtle difference between a man and a god, viz., that a god casts no shadow. Even so the cultured man seems to cast no shadow. His least little acts seem to be gems of a finer 'water' than the ordinary. His way of looking at things is just a little different from ours. Not that he takes a high line in every matter, which is a dangerous habit of mind breeding prigs and pedants. The man of true culture knows the boundary line between the material and the spiritual and has no temptation to confuse the two. He is prepared to 'render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's.' He sacrifices at all the shrines of life with offerings appropriate to each, because he has a correct valuation of the deities. He is in no danger of casting pearls before swine. The lines apply to him :

'A little more, and how much it is,
And a little less, what worlds away!'

We can see the distinctiveness of his tastes in little things: the colour and cut of his clothes; the look of his bound volumes; the shade of the stucco or paper on the walls of his drawing-room and library. There seems to be a tone of distinction about everything belonging to the truly

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cultured man. Not that he is more expensive than others. But there is a touch, as of a fairy-hand, that makes things possess new charm. There is no gaudiness ; no gushing ; no parade ; no self-advertisement, crude or subtle. On the other hand, there is sobriety, moderation, reticence, modesty and a dignified reserve in his word, action and taste.

There is similar distinction in his choice of furniture and house-decoration ; both in shape, colour, and quality. There is an aroma of natural superiority about him and every thing associated with him ; yet he is in no sense a 'superior' person. The lay-out of his garden, the selection of flowers and fruits, also furnish illustration of this distinction of taste. His garden may not be richer or larger than his neighbour's ; but it is in a subtle way superior. The reason is that his taste has some originality ; while his rich neighbour only got his bigger garden laid out on the lines recommended by gardening experts. Similar distinction of taste is displayed in the selection of paintings, prints, and drawings for the walls and mantel-pieces of his house. The untrained eye may not find any special beauty in them, but they have a charm for the art-critic and connoisseur.

The same difference and distinction will be observed in his library. You can know his tastes at a glance over the book-shelves. He has not collected books haphazardly ; not by the sets and series strung together by the publishers, but each book according to his own judgment and predilection. You may miss in his collection many of the 'Hundred best books of the world' as selected by Lord Avebury or somebody else, but he will not be the least ashamed of the omission. He may not go into explanation, but if necessary he can give convincing and consistent reasons for the presence or absence of any great book in his collection.

The cultured scholar's library is not a mere mass of books lumped together to satisfy a future desire to study ; nor like the Lady's Library described by Addison, intended to get a name for culture, refinement or taste. If you ask your cultured friend on what principles he has collected his books

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he will perhaps say, ‘Oh, it is a matter of hobby!’ But if you are attentive you will observe a method in the apparent madness, a consistent personal taste stringing the books together like the flowers of a multi-coloured garland. Whether the books were obtained consciously or unconsciously, they all agree with what he loves. It is almost impossible therefore that any of his books will be found with uncut pages. He will only receive as friend an author he knows thoroughly, and put a book on his shelf when he has read it and found its worth. Charles Lamb had such a collection, and Leigh Hunt possessed such a library, poor men both but cultured.

It is not necessary for a man of culture to be a jack of all trades, whether he is or is not master of one. The man whose tastes have been developed in one direction has by that very fact become qualified to appreciate, at least enjoy, whatever is good and beautiful in another direction. The cultured man need not actually be a musician but will show genuine appreciation of good music, and will hold his own opinion about various styles of music which is worthy of the consideration even of a trained musician. Like the intelligent onlooker of a game, he may see farther and clearer than the artist himself. Every art and profession has its horizon, beyond which the ordinary artist cannot see. The cultured man is he who can bring together the flowers of various seasons and horizons in one place, and assess their comparative values.

There is nothing showy about the truly cultured man. You will never catch him making an exaggerated claim to anything. On the other hand, he is rather shy and prefers to understate his case. But if you can draw him out sympathetically, he will genially yield to the topic or humour of the moment and then you can see the range, quality, richness, and variety of his mental stock. He does not carry his best points on his shirt sleeve. Rather the finest fancy work of his mind becomes visible when he has sufficiently unrolled his mental robe, like a specially made Benares *Sari* that does not bear its best on the borders,

but in the very centre of the fabric. And how wonderful that best is, only the sympathetic critic can judge.

The best scholarship is a product of great culture. It is wide and deep; accurate but not technical; massive and yet lightly carried. It is broad at the base like a mountain peak, and diminishes upwards in order to rise above the clouds. The pyramid is its type, not the mill chimney. The true scholar need not be encyclopædic or carry a whole library in his mind; but he is not at the same time a catalogue or an index volume, so to say, to his library and no more.

Cultured scholarship does not care for intellectual gymnastics, unnecessary hair-splitting, or what may be called 'flea-hunting' in the old wardrobe of the authors. That is the work of perverted ingenuity and book-worm assiduity; but the true scholar will forego his bed and dinner and burn many midnight candles on the keen scent of some quarry of a recondite allusion or elusive quotation. He will have no rest until he has run the game to earth. I knew of a scholar who had read the whole of American topical literature of the 19th century to teach Holmes' *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* to his senior students. The man who refuses to do this is a poor hunter in the forest of scholarship, however eminent he may otherwise be.

There is an expansiveness and restfulness about the cultured man. This is not to be confused with the good humour that follows a good breakfast. His mind has ample elbowroom to sit back and be at ease. He is not bound in the strait-jacket of narrow etiquette and formality. The true gentlemanliness of his mind raises him much above the 'gentleman' of the copy-book. He is no slave of rules laid down by others, but sets up new standards in the high walks of life. He is a law unto himself, for he is growing in the true line of evolution. His life is an organic whole, and not a many-coloured patch-work. He is not a 'tailor-made' man in any sense.

Culture implies refinement of sensibility. However great the cultured man's self-restraint and tolerance may be,

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he is strangely affected by the coarse and the vulgar. Hogarth's painting of the musician outraged by a passing street-band is a pictorial representation of the cultured artistic temperament. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's leaving a 'Kavi Sammelan' or Poets' symposium, with his pocket handkerchief tightly clasped to his nose, during the recital of some rankly piquant verses, is still remembered by Bengal as evidence of a finely cultured sensibility. The truly cultured man is a brave man who will not stop to smell a gutter, either from a false sense of decorum or under the pretence of catholicity of taste. He knows that poison and filth can never be good for anybody, catholic or otherwise.

There are many marks by which we shall know the man of true culture. One of these is contained in the beautiful Sanskrit proverb :

‘*Satyam bruyat priyam bruyat,
Na bruyat Satyamapriyam.*’

‘Say what is true; say what is pleasant; but do not tell an unpleasant truth.’ Yet blunt and even painful things have to be told sometimes in the interest of truth and honesty. But we must be careful that we do not tell the unpleasant truth at the cost of others, whom we either dislike or wish to hurt in a pique of anger and revenge. Even the moralist may not indulge in this kind of truthfulness at the cost of others. R. L. Stevenson, that unique moralist who never hurt to teach, says that there is such a thing as ‘inverted pleasure’ in condemning with fervour things that we, perhaps unconsciously, desire or covet or grudge another’s enjoying. Here is a great temptation for the moralist. Emerson said that no performance is worth the loss of geniality. Even truth is no excuse for giving avoidable pain to others. This is the finer side of *Ahimsa*. It is said of Sultan Nasiruddin of Delhi, a famous Persian poet, that he used to correct his verses at the suggestion of his friends to whom he read them. It was done just to please them, for the royal poet restored his original words afterwards, as he knew that they

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were the right words. This is perhaps an extreme instance of cultured suavity ; but the tendency is unmistakable.

The mind of the truly cultured scholar is a storehouse of beautiful thoughts, images and sentiments. If he happens to possess a good memory he will be able to quote the poets by the hour. Even if his memory is weak, you will hear him quote beautiful scraps and fragments round which his thought and experience have gathered, and his fancy loves to play like the March wind round the flowers. These have all been curiously unified in his mind, forming wonderful patterns to which his independent thought supplies the embroidered framework. The jewel of a thought culled from the classics will sometimes be found beautifully set against the golden background of his own thought, in the very best manner of the artistic jeweller. The subtle aroma of a sandal-wood jewel casket is all about his thoughts. Whatever the subject of conversation may be, he will be able to illustrate his observation by quotations from the great poets and thinkers of the world. If he has an original mind, he will derive illustrations from his own observation, experience, and reflection. If he is so minded he will tell you a rattling fine story, which you have not heard before or heard told so well. There are no air-tight compartments in his mind ; his thought easily passes from one subject to another ; from literature to philosophy, and from philosophy to practical experience. He will not say, 'Let us now change the topic', for if he wants he can imperceptibly lead the conversation from cabbages to kings and *vice versa*.

Such a person naturally gathers a circle of sympathetic and appreciative admirers and critics around him. He unconsciously becomes the focus of a cultural group.

But culture is from its nature a late-flowering plant of the garden of life. It is a middle-age virtue, and sorts with iron-tawny hair better than with a jet-black head. The passions of youth have now become largely tamed ; the fire of life burns low, and throws quaint patterns of light and shadow on the surrounding walls. This is the time of taking stock of the

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past and forecasting the future, in other words, of preparing a balance-sheet of life's losses and gains. Meditation steals into the mind, and fancy plays with us and shows us curious faces in the glowing embers. It is the hour of musing.

You cannot hope to see the fresh beauty of spring in the cultured man ; that you may perhaps find in the young poet. But your cultured friend has all the beauty of the autumn season. There is in him the restfulness and repose of the farmer after the labours of tilling and sowing ; and the peaceful contemplation of the ripening crops. He thinks more of the coming harvest than of the preceding toil, and even when his mind reverts to it, it is in thankfulness rather than regret. He sings with Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra, 'Grow old along with me : The best is yet to be.'

The season of his life has changed from the roasting and seething days of summer to the cool evenings of autumn with their beautiful sunsets. The paths of life are now free from the dirt and mire of clammy desire. There is a deeper green in the leaves and a brighter gold in the fields. The poet has rightly called it the season of 'mellow fruitfulness'. The cultured trees of his mind are bent with the weight of the mellowing fruits. There is a golden quality in the sunlight that imparts a new charm to whatever it touches, and is more tender than in summer. The temperature has become enjoyable and one sometimes feels in the morning and evening just the exhilarating sensation of a nip in the air, a gentle admonition of the coming winter as it were. The twittering swallows of thought have begun to gather in the mind.

The idealism of youth has been sobered and moderated by experience of the world. The intellect, so much tied to the service of the heart, has been emancipated and has begun to function independently. The man has begun to think, probably for the first time in his life.

Perchance he has forgotten the best part of what he had read with so much labour and thought for thirty years. But he finds that the river of thought and experience has left in

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him a deposit of fine silt, the fittest mould for the growth of the flowers of culture. There is a subtle change even in his face, the muscles of which have at last set in a permanent expression of serenity, nay beauty. In brief, physically and mentally the man is at last attuned to the music of life.

Love, that all-engrossing passion of youth and its concomitant, and lust of conquest, have moderated, perhaps become transmuted to a higher value. The love that was originally centered in one person has now spread over a whole family; unselfishness has become an unconscious habit by daily practice; charity has begun to soften the rigour of the sense of justice. The uncompromising fighter for principles has at last become an indulgent friend of the frail human being. This is the natural course of the evolution of culture, but like a law of nature it takes orders from nobody. It will come, if ever it comes, in its own good time; we can only wait for it prayerfully.

Tagore has expressed this beautifully:

'None of you shall ever make the flowers open. However much you exert yourselves and apply artificial stimulus to the stems, you never can make the buds blossom.'

The Unknown Lover

(A Story)

By PROF. N. S. PIADKE, M.A.

(*The Rajaram College, Kolhapur*)

Menaka started.

There was a knock at the door.

She hastened to wipe her tears, and to thrust in her pocket the letter that had made her so miserable.

Then picking up one of the books that lay in a neglected heap on the table, and holding it as if she had been reading it, she summoned a cheerful voice to ask, 'Who's that?'

'It's me—Leela.'

'Come in.'

Leela entered in a flutter, and instantly started her rebuke. 'What do you mean by thus staying away? Everybody else is there. Everything is ready. Even the camera is set. They are all regretting and wondering at your absence. At last they sent me to fetch you. Come.....'

'Please don't.....' pleaded Menaka.

'Don't be silly. We'll soon take our degrees, and scatter away—perhaps never to meet again. Didn't we intend this photograph as a sort of parting function? What charm can it have without you—the cleverest girl in our class, and the pride of everybody? Come now.....'

She brushed the book from Menaka's hand, and made a smile even more convincing than her urgent words. She expected Menaka to smile in return, and get up.

But Menaka neither moved nor smiled. She only whispered, 'You'll have to excuse me, Leela. I can't join the photograph.....'

'But why?' with great surprise.

Leela gazed at her friend, and thought there were traces

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of tears on her beautiful cheeks. She moved forward, and framing Menaka's lovely face with her hands, asked, ' You were crying ? '

' Who ? What an idea ? ' Menaka laughed feebly.

But Leela was not to be deceived. She persisted, ' Tell me the truth.'

' But I'm really all right.'

' You aren't, I know. Swear on my heart, and tell me. Weren't you crying when I knocked ? '

Menaka had then to confess the truth with a nod.

' What's wrong ? ' asked Leela.

' It's no use telling.' Menaka bit her lip.

' Even me ? ' Leela drew her close to her bosom.

Menaka made no reply. Only her eye-lashes flickered under the weight of tears.

Leela mopped her eyes with her own handkerchiefs. ' Please, let me know what's troubling you. Won't you ? Are you angry with me ? '

' Don't be a fool.'

' Then tell me.'

' Nothing much. Only I've to decide not to appear for the examination. I won't fill up my form. And that's why I can't join the photograph.'

' What do you mean ? ' with utter surprise.

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Leela was hugely surprised, and in addition to it she became deeply perplexed when Menaka refused to divulge the cause of her decision not to go up for the examination. She made a hundred wild guesses but to no purpose. She simply couldn't understand it. Menaka was the best scholar in the class. It was therefore impossible that she was not well prepared for the examination. Nor was Menaka a daughter of rich parents who could afford to treat the examination as a luxury to enjoy at leisure. On the contrary, it was imperative for her to take the degree this year. An orphan brought up on charity, Menaka had careered through the school and the college on the strength of the scholarships

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she won. And during the last two years, when she had given herself the benefit of hostel life, she had worked extra hard giving tuitions to earn enough for the hostel expenses. She had nobody in this wide world except an elder sister. It was obvious, therefore, that Menaka must be impatient to grab the graduation degree, and step into independent life. In fact she had always said so.....

Why had she then decided not to fill up the form ?.....

Leela couldn't see. And though she tried all her wiles, she couldn't induce Menaka to tell her secret.

At last on the third day Leela used the most infallible feminine trick. With tears in the eyes, and a sob in the throat, she said to Menaka, 'All right, don't tell me. Why should you if you don't care for me.'

On which Menaka put her arms round her neck. 'Sh! You mustn't talk such non-sense.'

Leela inwardly chuckled to find her trick working. But she showed no sign of her delight. On the contrary, she put a greater tremor in her voice as she said, 'I *will* talk non-sense. I know you haven't an atom of love for me. I love you so. But I'm a fool to do so when you don't care for my feelings.....'

Here she had to stop. For Menaka put her hand on her lips, saying, 'O how *could* you ever say this.....'

Leela waited for Menaka to withdraw her hand. Then she asked, 'Tell me then. Why have you decided not to appear for the exam.?'

'All right, I'll tell you. But you must make a promise.'

'Let's know.'

'You mustn't give out to anybody what I'll tell you.'

'O, trust me.'

Menaka took a letter from the drawer, and handed it to Leela. 'From my sister. Read it.'

It was a sad letter, containing the news of a sudden calamity on Menaka's sister. The poor woman's husband, who was a common schoolmaster in a small district town, lay

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seriously ill. It was a case of cancer, and doctors advised immediate operation. This meant huge expenses, and Menaka's sister had not a penny to spare. She wrote :

'I must ask for your help, though I know it's a shame to do so. Being your elder sister I should have helped you all along. But I'm not fortunate enough to be able to fulfil that duty. We're already in debt upto the neck, having had to run a home for a big family on a miserable income. This operation is the only thing that can save my husband. And it can't be done unless I get ready hundred and fifty rupees at the least. So I've no recourse left but to beg for your assistance. Please send me as much as you can. . . . '

Leela finished the letter, and looked at Menaka.

'Now look at this', said Menaka, giving her a Bank Book. Leela stared. There were Rs. 63-6-9 standing to Menaka's account.

Menaka asked, 'Do you now understand why I decided not to fill up the examination form ?'

'You're a great girl, Menaka' clapping her on the shoulder.

'O, no. I'm simply doing my plain duty.'

'Well, I don't know. You were terribly impatient to get through this examination. Your last fence to clear, you always said. Didn't you? The hour had arrived when your long labour would be rewarded. But now. . . . '

'But isn't this too a fine reward to be able to help my sister?', Menaka exclaimed, and made a captivating smile.

It was a false smile, Leela knew.

* * * *

Leela kept thinking of poor, unlucky Menaka, and that made her restless. Nothing interested her. Friends were boring, and books positively hateful. At last in the evening she decided to try a chat with her cousin, Manohar, and left the hostel.

Manohar was a bank clerk, and lived in bachelor rooms in one of the suburbs of Bombay. A very likeable fellow,

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his friends described him. Leela thoroughly agreed with this view. Manohar was a convincing proof, she always told people, that you could always keep smiling inspite of the pinch of poverty. Whenever she ran out of her cheerfulness, she would run down to him for a fresh stock.

She found him in his rooms thumbing the pages of a few illustrated catalogues of musical instruments.

She laughed. 'Shall I compliment you on the profound literature in your hands ?'

Manohar waved the catalogues at her. 'These are really very profound books, Leela. Too deep for me to fathom. For every company shouts at me that its products are the best and the cheapest in the market, so that having looked into all these amusing books I've lost my head, and can't decide which company to trust. Don't you pity me ?' . . .

'But why solicit pity ? Do you really seriously intend a purchase ?' . . .

'Yes. I've so often dreamt of sitting on a window sill on a moon-lit night, and playing on a mandolin ! Our Bank is giving me tomorrow a small bonus long overdue. So I thought.....'

'I can't admire your spendthrift plans. You rather ought to save money and think of getting married. When will you bring a wife for yourself ?'

Manohar was in a jesting mood. 'Believe me, a mandolin is far better to have than a wife. Would never quarrel. Would always entertain. And, when you want to be alone, would lie mute in its box as a wife never will.....'

'Shut up. I can't listen to such blasphemy of my sex !'

'But isn't there sound logic in it ?'

'Well, I don't know. Tell me, when do you intend purchasing the mandolin ?'

'Tomorrow. I'll get my bonus in the afternoon. And the moment I get it I'll be off to the musical stores. You must come again tomorrow evening. We'll celebrate the arrival of the mandolin with a coffee party.'

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'Does that mean you'll send me back without my usual coffee cup now?'

'Ah, what a dreadful charge. Don't you worry. You'll get your coffee all right, greedy woman.'

Leela burst into laughter, and got up to assist him in getting things ready for the coffee.

Her cheerfulness waned a little, however, as they both sat at the coffee. Thoughts of Menaka came back to her, and, with a pang, she wondered if it was right for her to be thus happy when her friend Menaka was probably brooding over her own sorrow.

Manohar noticed a shadow cross her face. 'What's worrying you?'

'Something very sad is about to happen,' muttered Leela as if to herself.

'Yes?'

'Very sad. You'll also curse it if you know.'

'Tell me.'

Leela hesitated for a moment. 'You know my friend Menaka.....'

'Well, what about her?'

'The finest girl in our class. She would surely have obtained a first class.....in the exam.....'

'Why "would have?"'

'Yes, it's now a case of 'would have been.' She can't appear for the exam.....'

Manohar appeared quite shocked. Setting aside his coffee he asked, 'But why? Is she ill?'

'No. It's rather like this. Listen.' And inspite of the promise she had made to Menaka, Leela narrated everything to Manohar.

* * * *

Manohar succeeded in concealing his own feelings as Leela spoke to him of Menaka's misfortune. But when she was gone, he crumpled in a chair with a heavy heart, and lay there like a stricken child, how long he did not notice. Night fell, and the street-lamps dutifully blazed outside. But he did

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not get up to switch on the light in his room. Nor did he think of going out to the hotel for his supper, though the usual hour came, and passed.

He kept thinking of Menaka. For, though while listening to Leela he had pretended as though Menaka meant to him nothing beyond the mere name of his cousin's friend, in his heart of hearts he had kept telling himself, 'This is about Menaka—the girl whom you adore and love !'

So, as he lay in the chair after Leela's departure, he frantically searched for a way to help his beloved girl. And as he did so, his mind again and again conjured up the memories of his various meetings with her.

Funny acquaintance it had been, both in its beginning and development.

He had first noticed her in the Bank. She had an account there, and since Manohar did duty at the 'Savings' window, she had to deal with him whenever she visited the Bank. Manohar had experienced a thrill of sympathy and admiration the very first time he had seen her. She was not extra beautiful. But she was pretty, prim, and precise; and her face glowed with intelligence, and her big dark eyes held a delicious frankness in them. She walked with such graceful, firm steps that you knew from them that she was a self-made woman. She walked like a queen, thought Manohar. There was a certain amount of poetic glamour round the figure of this young, brave, wide-eyed maiden, earning her own living, and keeping a small account of her own at the bank !

Who was she, he had always wondered, and never hoped to know.

But he had unexpectedly known it one day.

For she had come to the bank on that day with Leela. She was obviously Leela's friend, he had guessed; and then he had lost no time in asking Leela a hundred things about the 'glamorous girl,' without seeming curious.

And whatever he had learnt from Leela had made him even more fond of Menaka. He had then begun exchanging

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a word or two with her whenever she came to the bank. And his mind would linger on whatever replies she made.

And then a queer thing had happened one day.

He had been to the Pathé for the Matinee show. He was a bit late, and as the attendant guided him with a torch-light through a row of chairs he took the first vacant seat against which he stumbled in the darkness.

When the interval came, and the lights went up, he found himself sitting next to Menaka! 'Good Lord' he thought, as he noticed that she was alone.

He greeted her, and thought she smiled one of her sweetest smiles. Feeling encouraged he asked, 'Won't you like to come out a little?'

She nodded her dissent.

'But really let's go', he urged, 'You get such fine drinks at the Soda-fountain here.'

'I don't need a drink.'

'But what harm if you have one? You mustn't say no. Come...'

'How dare you be so free with me when we don't know each other much?' with a positive frown.

'True,' he smiled, 'We don't know each other much. But how can we ever, if you don't let ourselves?'

'I don't see why I should.'

'If you do, there is every chance of your liking me, and my liberties.'

At this Menaka had got up from her seat, and left the theatre in a huff.

She knew that Manohar, who had taken liberties with her, was Leela's cousin. But she had thought it prudent not to talk to her of the incident.

She had come to the bank a few days after this, and Manohar had taken a daring step. After having made the necessary entries in her pass book he had returned it to her, with a letter enclosed.

He had written :

'I love you, and I can't see any crime in expressing

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my love. Why should you get annoyed with me? If you don't return my love, you have every right and freedom to tell me so. But why this show of offence and annoyance? You can't treat me as sinner for simply telling you what I feel for you! Please do believe me. I bear to you a great love, and no amount of reproof can ever check it.....'

Menaka had torn the letter to pieces, and returned them in an envelope along with her pass book the next time she had called at the bank.

It was not only Manohar in whose memory these incidents lingered. Menaka, too, often remembered them. And every time that she thought of Manohar and tried to explain to herself his behaviour, she would have to conclude with the stereotyped utterance 'Strange!' And the fun of it all was that though she outwardly showed a strong disapproval of Manohar's advances, she could never decide if she was not inwardly immensely pleased with him.

With the result that she always kept thinking of the young man inspite of herself.

She thought of him now as she went to the bank to draw all her money to send to her sister. And that made her considerably nervous. Her visits to the bank used to make her nervous since the day she had returned the pieces of his letter. Her reason advised her to be stern and haughty to Manohar, but it cut her heart sorely to assume a stiff coldness towards this ever-smiling, honey-worded young man. She almost hated going to the bank.

But this would be her last visit, she told herself.

She went to the 'Savings' window as usual.

What wonder! Manohar was not there! There was another clerk, doing duty in his place.

'This is good in a way,' she thought.

But she couldn't help asking the new man, 'Where's the usual gentleman?...er.....I mean.....'

'He is on leave.'

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'Has he gone out of Bombay?' she heard herself asking, and wondered why she asked the anxious question when she professed not to care for 'the usual gentleman.'

She filled up and signed the necessary form, and handed it over along with her pass book across the window, saying, 'I want to close down my account. My balance is sixty-three rupees, and some odd annas and pies. Is that right?.....Let me have the whole amount.'

The clerk looked into the pass book, and then cast a very strange glance at Menaka. He then proceeded to consult two or three big ledgers, looked again with curious, unbelieving eyes first at her and then at her book, and at last seemed to suppress a smile, why Menaka could not guess.

'What's your balance you said?' he asked.

'Sixty-three rupees and.....'

'O, never.....'

Menaka felt a stab in her heart. With a tremulous voice she asked, 'Why? There isn't even that much?'

'No. Lots more.'

'What?'

'Yes. One hundred and sixty three rupees and.....'

'Oh! Impossible.'

'That's the truth. Only yesterday one hundred rupces have been deposited to your account.'

'Strange. I never paid them.'

'Somebody else seems to have.'

'But who? I must know his name. Tell me.'

'Sorry, but I can't. There's no signature on record.'

'But how did the bank accept the money without asking for the man's signature? Tch! Curious ways you bank people seem to have.'

'You may call them curious. But there they are. And you can't help them. We make no end of inquiries if you come and ask for money from us. But if you come to pay money we quietly receive it without asking a single question. Funny. But that's our rule.'

'Hang your rules,' thought Menaka. She flung a

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challenging glance at the clerk. ‘Look here. I don’t know about your rules. I only know that I must get to know the man who made the payment to my account.’

The clerk shrugged his shoulders. ‘That can never be done.’

‘I’ll see the manager.’

‘You may see the Prime-Minister of England if you like. But it would be no good.’

Menaka fumed and fretted at her helplessness. She even thought of drawing only sixty-three rupees from the bank, and let the inexplicable hundred remain to rust. But would it not be wiser, she asked herself, to take advantage of the windfall? She would then be able to help her sister with a bigger amount than she intended to send, and also to pay her own examination fees. She wavered for a moment between two impulses—the impulse to satisfy her sense of dignity by throwing aside the anonymous gift, and the impulse to warmly clutch the hand of a friendly fate.

The latter impulse proved the stronger in the end. What harm was there, she argued, if she accepted the help that had come her way unasked? True, the friend who helped was today unknown. But he would be found out sooner or later. And then she could repay his debt.

She therefore drew one hundred and sixty rupees, sent one hundred to her sister, and also filled up her examination form.

When she met Leela in the evening, she couldn’t help telling her everything. Leela was so overjoyed at the news that her dear friend *was* going up for the examination, that she never troubled herself with guessing who the secret friend of Menaka could be.

* * * *

A fortnight later Leela called on Manohar.

‘Very nice of you indeed, showing up after a whole fortnight! One would think you were lost into the blue!’

Leela made a winning smile. ‘But don’t tell me I’ve forfeited my claim on the usual coffee cup for that reason.

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Where's your mandolin by the bye? Let's have a look at you strumming its strings.'

Manohar shrugged his shoulders, and threw up his hands.
'No mandolin, Madam. Didn't buy any.'

'You don't mean it! You were awfully bent on buying one.'

'Yes. But I got sober later on, and realised the folly of wasting money over a mandolin.'

A very strange guess flashed across Leela's mind. She got up, and, moving to his table, picked up his diary.

Manohar protested. 'What's the idea? If ladies peer into men's diaries, they do so at their own grave risk, don't you know!'

Leela waved her hand. 'Ah, I know everything all right. I must find out where your bonus has gone.'

She fluttered the pages of the diary until she found the date she wanted to look up. One look at the entries on that page was enough. She had made the right guess.

Turning to Manohar with a radiant smile she clapped his hand with great warmth. 'So *you* helped Menaka? You did the sweetest thing. But don't you think I must be angry with you? You loved her all these days, and never let me have a hint of it! I'll never forgive you!'

* * * *

It was not long before Leela revealed to Menaka the identity of her secret friend. On learning it Menaka deeply regretted the way she had behaved with Manohar. She had never been able to understand exactly the nature of her feelings towards him. But now she felt certain that in her heart of hearts she had always loved the young man. Even her stiffness and coldness had been, she now thought, but a part of a lover's technique.

On the evening when the examination was over, she went with Leela to Manohar's rooms.

He welcomed them with his usual cheerfulness, and asked, 'What about your papers? Good?'

Leela nodded. 'Yes, fairly good. Menaka has come

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specially to thank you for your secret help, which alone made it possible for her to sit for the examination.'

Manohar looked embarrassed. But he smiled. 'O, I see.'

Menaka looked at him. 'I can of course never repay your debt fully. But I'll at least pay back the tangible part of it. I've decided to do extra tuitions, now that I would be free, and I hope to pay back.....'

Manohar cut in, 'O, no, no, no. I can't take back the money.'

'That'd be too cruel on me,' Menaka entreated, 'You must let me return your money. I'll feel humiliated if you don't.'

Manohar gazed at her with a hint of smile. There was mischief in his eyes as he said, 'All right. I'll take the money on one condition.'

Menaka was too simple-minded to scent mischief. She said, 'All right. I agree to your condition, whatever it is. Tell me.'

Manohar smiled at her. 'I must have not only the money, but also your hand along with it.'

This was too sudden. Menaka felt smothered by the rush of a strange embarrassment. Her cheeks flushed. She hung down her head.

Leela shot a significant glance at Manohar. 'O, you are the limit, my dear cousin! Actually proposing to my friend in my presence! There never was a more shameless young man!'

That made everybody laugh.

* * * *

Within a few days' time Leela found Manohar's rooms decorated with a wonderful wife, and also a beautiful new mandolin!

Sarat Chandra Chatterjee

By ABANI NATH ROY

The advent of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee in the field of Bengali literature was rather unexpected. In the nineteenth century, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was the undisputed monarch in the realm of Bengali literature. Bankim Chandra was a very learned man and wrote, besides novels, many religious discourses and essays. His place in Bengali literature as the pioneer of fiction is still very high. But his novels suffered from a religious or moral bias. He followed, in the treatment of his novels, the long loved dictum of punishing sin and applauding virtue. The inevitable result was that his characters did not develop on human lines. The reason is not far to seek. He had to satisfy orthodox society which was always watchful that no wrong ideal entered into society through literature. This was something like the tradition of eighteenth century Classicism in English literature.

Close upon Bankim came Rabindranath Tagore. He composed innumerable poems and wrote songs, essays, novels, and short stories. He brought lyricism into Bengali poetry: his poems breathed a freshness, an elegance and beauty which were hitherto unknown in Bengali literature. Tagore is admittedly a greater poet than a novelist, though as a writer of short stories he has hardly an equal. To Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, however, Bengali literature owes the beginnings of the realistic novel. It was left to Sarat Chandra to humanise Bengali fiction or, in other words, to introduce such characters into fiction as are more human and real than idealistic. Several years before he began writing, Sarat Chandra had left Bengal and was employed in the Rangoon Secretariat. He had outwardly no touch with Bengali literature. People in Bengal did not know him. He had written a short story in the annual number of the

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Kuntalin magazine in the name of his elder sister Anila Devi and obtained the first prize. But when all of a sudden, he wrote the story, 'The Child of Bindu,' in the monthly magazine *Jamuna*, the reading public were surprised. There were many who took it to be a composition of Rabindranath under a pen-name. But the instalments of the story continued and Rabindranath denied its authorship. 'The Child of Bindu' was followed by 'Charitraheen,' half of which was published in *Jamuna* but not completed. The writings had the stamp of a man of real power who wielded his pen with great facility. The people had, however, no opportunity of knowing anything about the development of Sarat Chandra's art; he took everybody by storm. The output was mature and the standpoint definite.

'The Child of Bindu' deals with the love of a barren woman for her sister's son and her desire to bring the boy up as her own, and the various complications that this desire led to in a joint Hindu family. The theme was not a bit new, but the treatment of the relations of the woman with her husband's elder brother, his wife, and other members of the family is very original and fine. An out-and-out native of the soil, Sarat Chandra chose a theme which was essentially Bengali in outlook.

In 'Charitraheen' ('Characterless') Sarat Chandra treated the theme of love from an entirely new angle, showing supreme indifference to conventional morality, and the effect of this book on the Bengali public was shocking. The novel deals with a love-episode between an educated young man of middle-class family and a maid servant in a boarding house where the young man used to live. No other Bengali writer had up till then dared portray the character of a 'low-class' woman from this standpoint. Bankim Chandra in his famous novel, 'Krishnakanta's Will,' had dealt with the love of a handsome Zamindar youth for a beautiful widow, but the story ends in the murder of the woman in vindication of conventional morality. But in Sarat Chandraji's story there was no suggestion of punishment or obloquy to the lovers

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concerned. At once there was a hue and cry from all quarters. The magazine which was publishing the novel serially, stopped publishing it as soon as some of its subscribers intimated their desire to discontinue subscription if the novel continued to appear.

But Sarat Chandra was not to be daunted. He continued to write. In his next novel 'Devadas,' a youth is found to be led astray by the failure of his early love, taking to wine and women. Parbati, the object of the love of Devadas, did not forget him even after she had been married to another man. Such affairs exist in real life, but their portrayal in literature was forbidden until Sarat Chandra broke this law. It was impossible to find fault with his work simply on account of his attitude of all-pervading sympathy with the fallen, all social victims or rebels. People read his books for his style, if for nothing else.

His novel 'Pallisamaj' (Village Society) attracted a great deal of notice. It gave a true and vivid account of life in the villages, with its petty jealousies and ignorance, superstitions and sillinesses. The great artist Sarat Chandra spun a love-drama around two beautiful souls against the background of village cruelty. Ramesh, the hero, was a bachelor, but Rama, the heroine, was a widow, although she had almost no memory of the man to whom she was married. But Hindu society has no solution for this apparent maladjustment, for widow-remarriage is not the general custom. The impulses of sex are allowed to go underground and thrive on people's sufferance. Sarat Chandra attacked the fabric of this moribund Hindu society and attacked powerfully. This want of a solution for the Ramesh-Rama affair and its consequent loss to society of normal, orderly life, rich in every sense of human progress, moved all readers of the book to thinking. It was claimed to be one of the best productions in Bengali literature and, naturally, ran into many editions like most of his other works.

But Sarat Chandra is at his best in his masterpiece, 'Sreekanta.' Many consider it to be his autobiography, but

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it is a peculiar combination of biography and fiction. I heard him remark on one occasion that the writing of this book did not tire him. On the contrary, whenever he felt tired and spent up, he found pleasure in writing one or two chapters of this book. It was just like the valve of a running engine, designed to let in fresh air and fresh light. The book is really marvellous and it would be difficult to give its complete picture within a narrow compass. I hear that it has been translated into French and selling in the streets of Paris. I do not know if it has been translated into any other language of the Continent.

The book is written in the first person. Four volumes of the book have already appeared, but the story has not ended or, in other words, the career of Sreekanta has not attained a finality. From this, it seems probable that the author will take it up when he finds himself in a reminiscent mood again. We have so far got in the book three love-episodes, viz. that of Rajlakshmi, Abhaya, and Kamalata, all exquisitely beautiful in delicacy, tenderness and depth. All are the accounts of girls whom society regards as fallen or undesirable, whom society has given no status. Abhaya is rather a bold type for Hindu society; ill-treated by her husband, she left him and went to live with one Rohini who loved her but to whom she was not given in marriage. It is needless to say that no society will subscribe to such anti-social ideas, for it abhors its own dismemberment. But the truth must be told that men have so long laid great stress on society and its moral laws alone and neglected the natural promptings of the human heart. The result has been, as might have been anticipated, that men were thrown under the wheels of a cruel and insensate society and powdered to dust.

Sarat Chandra belongs to the same society but deals with its maladjustments with a sympathy and pathos that is hard to surpass, and though it cannot be said that the regeneration of a new social order is an accomplished fact in Bengal, it is apparent that the seeds thereof have already been sown by Sarat Chandra and their ripening and fructification are only a question of time.

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Sarat Chandra is also noted for his easy and fluid modes of expression. His all-embracing sympathy for men and dumb animals, even in their weaknesses, overwhelms the reader. After Sarat Chandra, it is difficult to mention the name of any other novelist of the same order and range of interest. Sarat Chandra writes with great restraint, understanding and caution, and transforms his subject matter into art. His imitators, if they can be called so, have, on the other hand, failed to translate their subject matter into art. Sarat Chandra shows signs of drift towards barren intellectualism in his later compositions, of which 'Sesh Prashna' (The Last Question) and 'Bipradash' are the best illustrations. But he still holds a sway over the Bengali public, not for his intellect but for his breadth of mind and humanism. He is far and away the finest Bengali novelist of the modern generation; indeed, he is our first realist.

The Message of Omar Khayyam¹

By PROF. T. VIRABHADRUDU, M.A.

(*The Osmania University, Hyderabad*)

Omar the great Persian poet has often been misread and misinterpreted by his readers. As a poet he is excessively fond of wine, woman and song, and for that reason he has been condemned by people with a religious and moral bias as an Epicurean and Free-thinker. The verse given below is often quoted as being typical of his outlook on life :

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

These critics argue that, though his songs are very interesting, their spirit is demoralizing and is sure to exercise a most unwholesome influence upon immature minds, and the great popularity of the *Rubaiyat*² is proved by the fact that 'Omar just now is a cult, and seems to be the only religion of many.' This criticism of the learned and orthodox can be supported from any stanzas taken at random from the collection. According to Omar a whole empire can be sacrificed for a delicious cup of wine !

One draught of wine is better than the Empire of Kawus,³
And is better than the Throne of Kobad and the Empire of Tus.

¹ Omar Khayyam of Naishpur in Khorassan lived in the latter half of the 11th Century A.D. and died in 1123. In this essay all questions relating to his biography, the text of the Rubaiyat and the translations, and the influence or otherwise of Vedic scholars and Buddhist philosophers on the Persian Poet, which had engaged the attention of distinguished Orientalists for a long time, are omitted. The extracts given are generally from Fitzgerald's poetical translation which is very popular, especially with students of English literature. Quotations from Whinfield's famous edition and Heron—Allen's literal translation are also adopted wherever necessary.

² Quatrains.

³ Heron-Allen's Tr.

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That he does not hesitate to wound the feelings of his orthodox brethren who are scrupulous about their religious rites and ceremonies can be proved from the following :

What time is this for devotions ? Be silent, O Saki,
Let be the traditions, and drink to the dregs, O Saki.¹
How much more wilt thou chide, absurd divine,
Because I drink or am a libertine ?
Keep all thy tedious beads and pious show !
Leave me my jolly mistress and my wine !²

The poet's enthusiasm for wine is so great that he is not satisfied with its companionship during his life. Their association should not be forgotten even after his death :

When I am dead wash me with wine,
Say my funeral service with pure wine :³

If you want to know where he is on the resurrection-day, seek him 'in the earth of the tavern threshold !' There is no wonder that verses such as these have shocked the religious sense of many of his readers who conclude that this is but the reflection of a life of weakness and sin. Some have even styled him 'an Oriental Falstaff ready for any adventure, braggadocio and sack.' It cannot also be denied that Omar has a large class of admirers who put an allegorical interpretation on his sayings and see in them deep philosophy and wisdom. Thus like Vemana of Telugu literature he has the misfortune of being considered a wise sage by some and a reckless libertine by others. His critic has however to keep two things in mind. All the songs now associated with his name may not have been his.⁴ Secondly the songs are expressions of his lyrical moods and one might be disappointed if one always looked for consistency or strict logical

¹ Heron-Allen's Tr.

² Whinfield.

³ Heron-Allen.

⁴ 'The number of Quatrains seems to increase in proportion to the modernness of the Ms.'

P. xv. Quatrains of Omar Khayyam—Whinfield.

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sequence in them. But that his words are not always to be literally taken, the lines cited below give a warning to us :

To drain a gallon beaker I design,
Yea, two great beakers, brimmed with richest wine ;
Old faith and reason thrice will I divorce,
Then take to wife the daughter of the Vino.¹

The ideal placed before humanity by Omar is that, since life is very short, we must make the best of it. Be happy while you are here, and enjoy life, for

It is but a day we sojourn here below.²

In another place he asks

Of all who go, did ever one return ?³

This kind of exhortation that we must enjoy life heartily is opposed to that of many poets whose message has been that the soul is more precious than the clayey substance, our body, and that our pleasures on earth are insignificant as compared with those in store for us in heaven. Our faith in the Great Beyond is the one thing which elevates man from the level of the beast and so we have to sacrifice our worldly joys for the ethereal bliss we get after death. After all, it is as clear as daylight that the Infinite is greater than the Finite. But Omar believes that since the future is uncertain and the past is of no use, the only way left to us is to enjoy the present. He would say,

Nor earthly cash for heavenly credit sell.⁴

This view is a contrast to that of poets like Browning who thinks that men are fools when they are 'greedy for quick returns of profit.' He is angry with those who say

But time escapes,--
Live now or never !

for his sincere belief is that 'Man has Forever.' Among human

¹Whinfield.

² & ³ Whinfield.

⁴ Whinfield.

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beings some have loved the pleasures of the body for their own sake and some have discovered in them a means to an end, that which gives full scope for the development of the soul. There are no doubt many who can put up with any kind of misery now, because they are hoping for Tomorrow. There are also those who, however great or rich they may be, are not satisfied with what they have, but are asking for more. They expect they will be happy when they get that *more*, and once it is realised, they are unhappy because they have not got *more*. There is really no limit to man's ambitions and hopes. As an English poet has put it, 'Man never is but always to be blest.' The Persian poet pleads for another point of view regarding life. He exclaims,

Unborn Tomorrow, and dead Yesterday,

• Why fret about them if Today be sweet!

That this advice is not after all useless can be verified with reference to life. Our troubles in life are generally of two kinds: memory of past affliction, or fear of future suffering. Supposing a man is celebrating the marriage of his son,—marriage is the happiest occasion in the life of a family—while everybody is cheerful, all on a sudden the parents of the bridegroom become gloomy and are plunged in sorrow. The memory of a son who died years ago is enough to make them depressed during the whole feast; or should a thought—a prophecy made by some good or bad astrologer—cross their mind, they become quite unhappy anticipating some future misery, notwithstanding the merriment they are surrounded by. Omar declares emphatically that the only way to be happy is to think of the present moment. He says people often talk of his achievements in science, for, did he not reform the calendar? Yes, he did prepare the calendar but he took care to omit two days: the day yet to come and the day that is gone! Those that look for Tomorrow may come to grief, since that Tomorrow may never come, or, by the time it comes,

I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years !

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Man is after all mortal and our ideals or attainments cannot prevent us from succumbing to the Inevitable. For instance, we love some people and are deeply attached to them. So far as we are concerned, our love is a reality, it is an indissoluble tie. But it eventually proves to be a mirage, for, after a brief stay, 'One by one our friends creep silently to Rest.' That it is the lot of the great as well as of the small is certain, because kings and potentates who can control the destinies of millions cannot control their own! Note

How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

That nature does not make any distinction between the prince and the beggar is clear, for, what is the fate of royal palaces which were once the glory of their monarchs?

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep.

However great the human being may be, once his term is over, he passes into the Limbo of Oblivion. He is only 'one of the Pawns on the Chess-Board' and will soon be thrown into the 'Box of Non-Existence'¹ Stories are told of people in ancient times who buried their jewels and their treasure underneath the earth. It was quite safe in the earth and could be picked up again when there was need. But the case of the human being is entirely different, and 'once buried, we are not dug up again.' Nature tells the same tale, though we do not benefit by the lesson. See how,

The tulips that are withered, will never bloom again:²

The sum total of the poet's wisdom is this:

One thing is certain, that Life flies;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;

This granted, what should we human beings do?

Drink wine and fling not life to the winds;

¹Heron-Allen's Tr.

²Heron-Allen's Tr.

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Forget the past, worry not about the future, live in the present, love life, and all will be well.

It is possible to argue that this attitude to life tinged with pessimism is only a kind of medieval superstition not worthy of men of light and learning. The problem of human destiny has been discussed by eminent philosophers and sages in every epoch and they have tried to give illumination to mankind otherwise groping in the dark. Omar's opinion is that metaphysics and science are of no use to any one in this matter. He says he visited 'Doctor and Saint' but to no purpose. It is true he studied much and under eminent scholars and either discussed this subject with them or heard it discussed by them. We are also told that his own Guru was one of the most remarkable men of his time. He was himself well-versed in many branches of knowledge. Unfortunately he was not any the wiser for it. It is true he 'heard great Argument about it and about,' but the result was this :

But evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

After travelling laboriously for several days, you feel you are not an inch farther than the place at which you started! Thus, notwithstanding our intellectual discussions, the question remains ever the same. Life is a mystery. With the help of our science or logic we may explain away several things of the Universe, their causes and effects, but in our unsophisticated moments, the heart is exactly in the same condition as before. It loses itself in wonder at the mysterious nature of God's acts and the puzzle remains the same at all times. For instance, this eternal question has three parts :

'The Why—The Whence—The Whither :

Why have I come into this world? Where have I come from? Where shall I go to after my death? Are there not people in the world who some time or other in their lives pass through this experience? A person with a contemplative turn of mind when he is alone—away not only from the din

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and bustle, but also temporarily cut off from the interests of life—is likely to fall into such a mood and the chain of ideas finally leads him to this question. He will be convinced in the end that Providence is inscrutable and all our knowledge and philosophy is helpless in the face of the Divine Mystery. Thus the problem,

The purpose of this coming, and going, and being,¹
is a puzzle. Khayyam cries out in despair

I know the questions but hear no replies.²

Sages no doubt there are, but are they in any way better than we? They also must die, nor can their wisdom exempt them from death. True, many of these learned men have preached great things. But they share the same fate as others, for,

Their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

Take his own case. For a long time ' he stitched the Tents of Science,'³ but at last.

The shears of Fate have cut the tent-ropes of his life.

It might be pointed out that the fact of their death is no argument against their wisdom and eminence. Setting aside for a moment the idea of their death which is not in their power, are they during their life better than average human beings? Dr. Johnson narrates the story of a great philosopher who by his scholarship and character extorted the admiration of all. His knowledge and saintly appearance were such that Prince Rasselas took him for the happiest man on earth. One who is not swayed by passion or who is not moved by sorrow, is he not the greatest man? But this very same philosopher was found later in a semi-dark room weeping and sobbing over the death of his only daughter! Rasselas was shocked but Johnson's explanation is interesting:

They (Teachers of morality) discourse like
angels, but they live like men.

¹Heron-Allen's Tr.

²Khayyam=Tent-maker

³Whinfield.

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Thus no man has succeeded in his contention against nature. The knot of human death and destiny is still unravelled. All that the great poet knows about himself and the world is this :

From earth I came, and like the wind I go!¹

Confession of ignorance is the beginning of wisdom, and in Omar Khayyam the reader finds one of the wise men of the world.

Omar Khayyam's view of life seems to have been based on what may be called Fatalism. It is not possible for any one to find a suitable explanation for most of the things that happen in the world. There is a Fate presiding over our lives and it is unwise to protest against its decree. You may doubt the propriety of many events in life, you may be surprised at the misery of several pious people and the triumph of wicked creatures in the world. You may pray and pray but the matter has all been settled already and you must accept the Inevitable. This belief in Pre-destination is likely to be challenged by many people of the present day. The controversy between Free-will and Destiny is acute and we cannot easily come to any decision. Khayyam's opinion is that we must bow to Destiny. It has been written on the tablet already, our success or failure. The Hindus call it *Lalata Likhitam* (Writing on the forehead). Our prayers 'cannot cancel half a line' nor can 'all our tears wash out a word of it.' In our helpless condition we sometimes appeal to the heavens above but the poet says that the sky

Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

He asks us to remember the case of the Ball which does not consider 'Ayes and Noes' but goes right or left according as the player strikes it. But has the Ball any voice in it?

And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—He knows---He knows!

In other words we are not the persons to say who ought to be rewarded and who not. The whole thing is wrapped up

¹Whinfield.

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in mystery and there is only one Being that knows the *Why* of everything. People of modern times cannot easily reconcile themselves to the idea of meekly submitting to Fate but how can we explain the case of pious and God-fearing people often plunged in suffering? So far as their careers in this life are concerned, none of their acts deserves this kind of mortification. Romeo and Juliet are a young couple full of love, and love is a divine quality. Their motives are pure and their love is ethereal. Their characters are so sweet that, had they lived on, their conjugal relations would have been ideal and they would have showered bliss on all those that chanced to see them. But they were cut off from tasting that melody which was so richly offered to them. When we ponder over these questions, we can come to one of two conclusions. Either there is no law of moral order in the Universe and thus we are utterly helpless with regard to our worldly happiness, or, man here reaps the consequences of his past actions, i.e., foolish or wicked acts performed in a previous birth. (The Hindu Doctrine of Karma.) The literary critic of Shakespeare is satisfied with the idea that Shakespeare is an artist and that his aim is to give pictures of life. Such curious events we meet with in life, and Shakespeare shows his remarkable psychology by giving them their proper place in his drama. The pious devotee would believe in God's justice and His mercy and would not be so heterodox as to question the right or wrong of these occurrences. He is convinced that God is essentially merciful and that He is ever ready to show his generosity to mankind. But Omar on the other hand, is worried by a doubt, a very important one, in this connection. If God in his abundance of mercy created Man and placed him in Eden, why did he 'devise the snake'? This problem—the origin of sin—is a very difficult one. You create a weak creature and place him in circumstances where he is likely to be victimised by Evil, and still say he is a sinner! The question thus is: 'Who is responsible for our sins?' The Persian poet's opinion is that all these are foolish and impertinent questions. He is

full of irony whenever he refers to these questions and doubts. He says, 'God knew on the Day of Creation that I should drink wine; if I do not drink wine God's knowledge would be ignorance.'¹ He knew it, which means that I have obtained His permission. If he thought it bad, he ought to have taken care to prevent it! Thus he points out how foolish we are in arguing against sinners. Here is a very interesting question :

What man here below has not sinned, canst thou say?
And how could he have lived, had he not done sin, canst thou say?
So if I do wrong and thou punishest me wrongly,
What difference between Thee and me, canst thou say?²

In a modern Telugu Social Drama,³ the hero is an interesting fellow. He leads a dissipated life and is a rogue, but he has a relieving sense of humour. When one of his friends threatened him with condign punishment at the hands of the Almighty for all his immoralities here, his reply was this. On the Judgment Day, he would put this question straight to his Master : 'Did you create me as your dependent or as independent of you? If I am your dependent, *you* are to blame for my sins; if I am independent, it is beyond your jurisdiction, my case!' Khayyam's advice is this: 'Do not raise these foolish questions. Have faith in Him and all will be well.'

One very interesting section of the *Rubaiyat* is the group of verses in which the Episode of the Pots is given. The poet says that he one day went into the market-place and stood in the Potter's workshop when he overheard a very amusing but highly instructive discussion going on among the 'Clay Population.' While the Potter was pounding or thumping his clay, one of the Pots murmured, 'Gently, Brother, gently, pray!' Another remarked: 'The potter took me from the common Earth only to stamp me back to common Earth again.' Immediately another member of this confer-

¹Heron-Allen's Tr.

²Whinfield.

³Kanyasulkam by G. V. Appa Rao.

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ence rose up and contradicted the previous speaker by pointing out,

'Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy.

Having created an object which 'was the result of his fancy, would he be so foolish as to destroy it soon after? Another speaker was worried because

They sneer at me for leaning all awry.

What can be the reason for 'my ungainly make?' 'Did the Hand then of the Potter shake at that time?' A somewhat elderly member of this great fraternity stated that it was a mistake to attribute their differences—in size, shape *etc.*—to any evil motives on the part of their Master. No doubt some talk of a 'strict testing' but

He is a good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.

While this sort of conversation was going on in all seriousness among the Earthen Lot regarding their origin and growth and end, one very ingenious member, with a view to set at rest this silly controversy, struck at the root of the matter by impatiently crying out

Who *is* the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?

The meaning of this allegorical episode seems to be this. The Potter is the Supreme Creator and the Pots are the various classes of human beings. The questions raised by the several pots at their conference represent several points of view regarding human life in relation to its Creator. For instance, we are occasionally puzzled by this question: Is man's life and career on earth of any value to the Supreme Being, for he comes out of dust and goes back to dust? When we prize a thing highly and want it to endure for ever, we take care to select the best material, spend our best attention on it, shield it as much as possible from destruction, and if, in spite of all vigilance, it should be lost, our sorrow would be deep and long-lasting. If God cared for man, He

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would have made him more happy and would have given him a longer period of existence. Evil, misery, and death would not be, in that case, so powerful as they are now. It is just like this. In some parts of our country, at the time of a certain festival,¹ the people construct an effigy and decorate it nicely during the day, but when night comes, every member of the community—man, woman and child—will throw a stone at it and reduce it to ashes, almost in the twinkling of an eye. To men who hold that human life is not precious in the eyes of God, a reply is given in the following way. Even a foolish child will not, after making a little toy to please its fancy, shatter it to the ground in rage. If God did not attach any importance to the human being, why should he create him at all? It is ridiculous that in a freak you should invent some new thing and dash it to pieces immediately after. Only a lunatic or eccentric fellow is capable of such sudden fits of temper. The Creator of the Universe, whose wisdom and judgment are perfect, is not likely to have such an attitude to human life. For Omar Khayyam this question is always a riddle. He reveals his helplessness when he asks

For love of whom did he make them—for hate
of whom did he break them?²

Again there is a third question: Why should there be an ugly pot ‘leaning all awry?’ If God is kind to all creatures—He is our father and mother—, why should some of us be good and some bad, some lovely and others awkward, some strong and some weak? Can it be that these differences exist because of His desire to test our abilities and work? A strict teacher judges students according to their work and distributes rewards and punishments in proportion to their intelligence and industry or want of it. But to compare the All-Merciful Father to a strict teacher is a bad comparison. The teacher—the bad teacher—may be anything, but the father divides his love equally among all his children.

¹Holi.

²Heron-Allen's Tr.

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Sometimes when the father's estate is to be distributed among the sons, the weaker boy gets a double share for the reason that he is incapable. So God's mercy is intended for sinners and they are safe! Thus there are several points of view regarding man and his position in the world, but the great mystic tells us how foolish we are in raising these questions when we miss the fundamental question: Potter and Pot, who are they? Creator and Created, are they two distinct entities which are always separate? Are they not two phases of the same Force? The Poet says that there is one thing which can never be clearly explained.

Who makes-Who buys-Who sells-Who is the Pot?¹

We little minds treat things in a little way. We distinguish between Seer and Seen, Giver and Taker and so forth. To the great poet that looks from on high,

Thou art both the real thing seen and the spectator.

Omar says you distinguish between Thee and Me but he exposes its hollowness by advising you to recognise

The Me within Thee Blind!

We also talk of pious people and sinners, and of heaven and hell and of a Fate writing something on the tablet. To the *Advaitic* philosopher that Omar Khayyam was,

Tablet and Pen, and heaven and hell, are within thyself.²

Animate and Inanimate are our distinctions. But to the mystic, Potter and Pot are made of one substance. The Pot points out, 'Treat me, brother, well: I am of the same stuff as you are.' The essence of the poet's wisdom is contained in this :

My Heart said to me : 'I have a longing for inspired knowledge,
 'Teach me if thou art able.'
I said the Alif. My heart said : 'Say no more.
 'If one is in the house, one letter is enough.'³

¹ Heron-Allen's Tr.

² Heron-Allen's Tr.

³ Heron-Allen's Tr.

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Our religious men generally miss this, and they are immersed in doctrines, creeds, forms and rules ; but he would say

O Fools ! the Road is neither here nor there.¹

We are all eager to attain salvation but Khayyam's advice to us is quite simple :

A hundred Ka'bas equal not one heart,
Seek not the Ka'ba, rather seek a heart!²

There is only one thing which lifts man to the level of the divine, love of humanity, and we have Khayyam's assurance for it :

And never injure one nor yet abuse,
I guarantee you heaven, and now some wine!³

By loving his fellow creatures, the human being will make others happy and will enjoy happiness himself. That this is superior to every other kind of piety or religion is revealed in the poet's exhortation to mankind :

Yea, drink and even rob, but, oh ! be kind!⁴

Sympathy for man and belief in the Supreme Being are the only things that lead man to Heaven; and the poet's prayer is this :

What matter faith, unfaith, obedience, sin ?
Thou'rt all we need, the rest is vanity.⁵

In the Hindu *Bhagavatam*, the story of Sri Krishna and the *Gopis* is exactly similar to this point of view. The milkmaids were quite innocent. They were not learned. They were engaged in no *tapas* (severe penance). Great pandits and sages recited the *Vedas*, performed religious sacrifices, went through austere discipline, meditated and meditated. They could not meet Krishna and He was not accessible to them. If one wanted to find Him, one had to go to the cottages of the shepherd lasses where He could be seen playing in the

¹ Heron-Allen's Tr.

² Whinfield.

³ Whinfield.

⁴ Whinfield.

⁵ Whinfield.

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sand in front of their houses, or stealing away their clothes or singing or dancing with them. Scholarship is not knowledge. Real knowledge is Love.

In conclusion, it may be said that Omar's poetry is not so Epicurean in its philosophy as superficial observers often make it out to be. The wine, woman, and song which he so warmly praises stand really for three important factors in life on which the happiness of man depends. One is that Nature or Providence has placed innumerable good things before us, and we are expected to be happy 'by sharing the joys of living.' Love of life is the one thing a human being is essentially in need of. Without it he will fall into despair and create a hell into which he throws not only himself but all those that surround him. The second factor in human life is *Love*. Woman is the embodiment of love and she has inspired most of the great poets of the world. To these two things must be added the pleasures of song, culture and art. It must be remembered that Omar was a great lover of beauty in nature, in man, and in culture. The question whether he is a philosopher can be answered in this way. He is as much a philosopher as any poet can be. He is not a philosopher in the sense that any particular school of thought or system of conduct or code of principles was founded or preached by him consistently or logically. He was a lyrst and poet, but one who took interest in human life and gave expression to his doubts and longings and dealt poetically with questions relating to the Ultimate Reality. That he was a most cultured man and that he reached the summits of scientific knowledge at the time needs no saying.¹ That he is one of the greatest lyrsts of the world is also admitted. How far he was fond of wine in actual life is a question on which opinion is divided. That he is sincere in his utterance is true, for, he never flatters the public or the scholars by quoting their authority; on the other hand, he deliberately outrages their feelings. If he is pessimistic occasionally, it is because a human being is liable to such moods.

¹P 12-18—Umar Khayyam—Otto Rothfield.

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He only voices forth the vague fears and melancholy thoughts that take possession of the human heart now and then. In his poetry we find a wonderfully poetical and epigrammatic expression given to the Eternal Doubts about human life and destiny which find an echo in every heart but which most people cannot, or will not, express. His songs make a direct appeal to the heart and his message to humanity is this:

Your stay is brief: make the best of life: be content: accept things as they are: rebel not against Fate: learn the lesson of Love: never misread One for Two and you are blest.

Chitrasalas: Ancient Indian Art Galleries

By C. SIVARAMAMURTHY, B.A. (HONS.)

INTRODUCTORY

Indian art is characterised by spontaneity; the beauty lavished and the dexterity of workmanship displayed on comparatively insignificant articles of use—articles of luxury are quite a different matter—are sufficient proof of the veracity of the statement. The fantastic curves that shape the quaint parrots on the borders of cloths of wear or on vessels of use, the swans that adorn the tops of lamps or the peacocks that hold the *pan* in different parts of their body, the metal fishes that sway to and fro on their fragile scales, and the queerly shaped tortoise that holds the conch of the Lord are all creations of the genuine art-brain of India.

Indian art, though possessing all the charm of a woman and all her grace and, gaiety, has never been seen huddling in a harem—I mean a single and separated compartment or, as we style it today, a watertight division—unlike the sinew-loving masculine Western art that confines itself to galleries and academies. There has been no artificial taste in India. All that it possesses is natural. Art has been part of her life. The *vibhramavilasas* of Indian women are an example. Even the *tilaka* applied to the forehead speaks of the artistic taste of its wearers—the *ardhachandratalaka* that Sri Harsha praises the *kasturitilaka* of Sri Krishna that Lilasuka sings of.

A nation with its women drawing flowing patterns in line and colour over every possible surface in their homes for mere pleasure, and because of decorative instinct, cannot be asked to show any reservoir of art—any special school of art. It is not individualistic in India but general, not confined but universal. And the universality and all-pervasiveness of

aesthetic beauty and appreciation in India accounts for the dearth of galleries and museums as separate and isolated institutions; but as parts of a larger whole we have them in plenty. Just as the Divine Spirit which is immanent is more manifest in some places than in others, we have the *Chitrasalas* and other *Kāutukagrihas* as more profusely decorated and picturesque parts of mansions and houses decorated all over in a general way. It is also to be noted in this connection that our temples, as storhouses of picture and sculpture, served to educate the masses in the appreciation of beauty and a knowledge of anecdote in such an unequivocal way that the full purpose of the *Chitrasala* was realised in these sacred precincts.

But on this account it cannot be held that *Chitrasalas* as separate institutions were totally absent. The pink of perfection of the artists' craft was preserved by the king in special art galleries in the royal palace, the public art-houses and such other institutions. The grandees and other enlightened citizens of the kingdom took pleasure in collecting art treasures to decorate their private *Chitragaras*. Even as late as the 16th century we have the *Chitrasala* of Akbar in Fatehpur Sikri, where he used to receive his guests, mentioned in the *Hirasaubhagya*.¹

TYPES OF CHITRASALAS

Thus we have three distinct types of *Chitragaras*, those of the royal palace, the public art-galleries and the private ones. Of the *Chitragaras* of the palace it should be noted that there were separate ones for the harem² and very often every individual queen and princess possessed

1. अथ प्रदेशीव स केशिनामुना विधातुकामः सुकृतस्य संकथाम् ।
इदं महीन्दुर्मुनिचन्द्रमब्रवीत् पुनर्नु पूज्या मम वित्रशालिकाम्॥ XIX. 1.
Akbar receives the Jain monk Hirasūri in his Citrasalā.
2. अधिराणान्तःपुरप्रासादमिममस्याभित्रशालिकायाः प्राञ्छणवितर्दिकोपविष्टां
समाभिष्ठ देवी... Tilakamañjari, p. 24.

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her own picture chamber which generally happened to be her sleeping apartment also. We come across three references to such a *Sayana Chitrasala* in the *Tilakamanjari*.³ Auspiciousness being important in India, people believed in *Suprabhata* by getting up in the morning with beautiful pictures around them to meet their eyes as soon as they woke to the sound of the lute. It is this mark of auspiciousness that accounts for picture decorations of bathing apartments⁴ which on that account formed minor *Chitrasalas* of the *jalamandapa*.⁵

Of the third type of *Chitrarūpa*—the private one—the finest, perhaps, was the one to be seen in the house of the *Panyangana* (courtesan). Of the wealth and refinement of the courtesan of ancient India, the *Mricchakatika* is perhaps one of the very best books that present a most graphic picture. The mansions of the hetaira, of which there is a beautiful description in the *Padataditaka*, are adorned by so

3. रणितमणिना भूषणचक्रवालेन वाचालयन्ती चित्रशालिकं शश्यामसुच्छत्।

Ibid. p. 238.

...प्रविद्य वन्धुसुन्दरीद्वितीया शयनचित्रशालाम् ...

Ibid. p. 246.

आरोप्य च शयनचित्रशालिकायामवलभितगतिस्तकालमेव गत्वा... .

Ibid. p. 266.

cf. विचित्रचित्रशालिनि...शश्यागृहे Nalacampū, p. 83.

Royal *citraśalās* in the palace are mentioned as situated in the Rākṣasa or Nairṛta dik according to the Mayamata.

राक्षसे नागवासं च चित्रशिल्पादिसौधकम् ॥

Mayamata Chap. 29 sl. 58.

4. चित्रद्विपाः पश्चवनावतीर्णाः करेणुभिर्दत्तमृग्नालभङ्गाः ।

नखाङ्कुशाधातविभिन्नकुम्भाः संरब्धसिंहप्रदृतं वहन्ति ॥

Raghuvaniśa, XVI, 16.

5. अतिविचित्रानेकचित्रशालं जलमण्डपमगच्छत् ।

Tilakamañjari, p. 88.

cf. शाला वा श्वभिषेका सर्वविचित्रान्विता सभा तत्र ॥

Mayamata Ch, 29 sl 101.

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many *Chitrasalas*⁶ and, as the *Dhūrtavitasamvada* informs us, painting seems to have been practised very much in the *Vesya* *grihas* to the extent of influencing those that frequented them.⁷ How far the art of painting was helpful to the *hetaira* is best understood by us when we read the *Mṛicchakatika* wherein is presented the activity of *vitas*, *dhurtas* and *chetis*—experts in bringing together the harlots and libidinous *nagarakas*—loitering about the stately mansion of the *vara-vilasini*, *Vasantasena*, with pictures of both (of *vesyas* and *vesyakamukas*) in bright and gay colours.⁸ But the motive for practising this pleasing art of painting as well as others of the fine-art group, music, dancing etc. is, as Ganapalita says to his friend, condemning the conduct of harlots, not for their own pleasure (*viuoda*), but merely to wheedle into their snare weak-minded victims by an exhibition of their special capabilities in the arts.⁹

TYPES OF PICTURES IN CHITRASALAS

Nothing special need be said about the theme for a picture. The *Vishnudharmottara*, and following it the *Silharatna*, states that subjects from the three worlds form suitable

6. ...लिमलिखितमूक्षमस्थूलविविक्तरूपयशतनिवद्धानि बन्धसन्धिद्वागगवाक्ष-
वितर्दिसंजवनवीथीनिवृहकानि...चित्रशाललङ्घतानि
भवनवरावतंसकानि वारमुख्यानाम् ।

Pādatāditaka (Caturbhāṇī) p. 12.

7. प्रागल्म्यं स्थानशैये वचननिपुणतां सौषुवं सत्त्वदीसि
चित्रशानं प्रमोदं मुरतगुणविधिं रक्तनारीनिवृत्तिम् ।
चित्रादीनां कलानामधिगमनमथो सौख्यमग्रं च कामी
प्राप्नोत्याश्रित्य वेदो यदि कथमयशस्तस्य लोको ब्रवीति ॥

Dhūrtavitasamvāda (Caturbhāṇī) p. 27.

8. विदूषकः—...इमं चापरे मदनसन्धिविग्रहचतुरा विविधवर्णिकावलिम-
चित्रफलकाग्रहस्ता इतस्ततः परिभ्रमन्ति गणिका कृद्विटाश्च ।
Mṛicchakatika, Act IV.
9. मांसरसाम्बवहारः पुरुषाहतिपीडया न तु सृहया ।
आलम्ख्यादी व्यसनं वैदग्ध्यम्ख्यातये न तु विनोदाय ॥

Kuṭṭinimata, ६१. 307.

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picture themes.¹⁰ Thus it would be nothing too difficult for us to guess what would be found in a *Chitrasala*. But there is a specific injunction in the *Vishnudharmottara* that only certain pictures—those representing *sringara*, *hasya* and *santa*—ought to be kept in private houses and the king's residence.¹¹ Pictures representing all other *rasas* are confined to *Deva-vesmas*, temples and the like, and the audience chamber of the royal palace. In every other place we have pictures of all types. So it goes without saying that private *Chitrasalas* and the *Chitrasalas* of the royal harem have only a limited scope. But the public galleries ought to have possessed all sorts of pictures. Of course, there appears to have been a special

10. यथा नाथ्ये तथा चित्रे बैलोक्यानुकृतिः स्मृता ।

Citraśūtra of Viṣṇudharmottarara.

जङ्गमा वा स्थावरा वा ये सन्ति भुवनत्रये ।

तत्तस्वंभावतस्तेषां करणं चित्रमुच्यते ॥

Silparatna.

11. शृङ्गारहास्यशान्त्याख्या लेखनीया गृहेषु ते ।

परशोपा न कर्तव्या कदाचिदपि कस्यचित् ।

देववेशमनि कर्तव्या रसाः सर्वे नृपालये ॥

राजवेशमनि नो कार्या राजां वासगृहेषु ते ।

सभावेशमसु कर्तव्या राजां सर्वरसा गृहे ॥

वर्जयित्वा सभां राजो देववेशम तथैव च ।

युद्धशमशानकरुणामृतदुःखातकुत्सितान् ॥

अमङ्गल्यांश्च न लिखेत् कदाचिदपि वेशमसु ।

Viṣṇudharmottara.

Though scenes of battle and bloodshed were forbidden in private houses we have evidences of these having been painted in public art galleries, public halls, temples and the like. As an example can be cited the famous and majestic *Tripurāntakamūrti* painted on the walls of the inner shrine of *Bṛhadīśvara* in Tanjore. Haricandra suggests pictures of battlemen in the lines.

.....करलाषववशेनालश्यशारसंधानमोक्षणकालेषु सदा समारोपितशरा-
सनतयालेख्यलिखितेष्विव धानुषेषु पदगगनतलचराचरकरालकरवाल-
खण्डितमस्तकनिकरेष्वातिदूरमुत्पत्त्वं गगनजलघिरातपत्रशङ्काकरेषु

Jivandharacampū p. 28.

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attachment to *Mangalyalekhyā* and we should have had more of them than any other.

Now to go more into details, we have life histories—important incidents in one's life—painted to adorn the *Chitrasala* and we have an instance of it in the *Uttararamacharita*¹² that bases itself in this particular instance on the *sloka* of the *Raghuvamsa* for this idea.¹³ Scenes from Damayanti's life are painted similarly in Kundinapura.¹⁴ Though not in the *Chitrasala*, we have a similar painting of life incidents in the pictures of Parasurama executed on the *Vimana* of Indra.¹⁵ In the *Gathasaptasati* of Hala we have a *sloka* telling us of incidents from Rama's life painted in private *Chitrasalas* (on the walls

12. लक्ष्मणः—आर्य ! अर्जुनेन चित्रकरेणास्मदुपदिष्टमार्यस्य चरितमस्यां वीथ्यामभिलिखितम् । तत्पश्यत्वार्यः ।
 रामः—जानासि वत्स, दुर्मनायमानां देवीं विनोदाथितुम् ।
Uttararamacarita, Act I.
13. तयोर्यथाप्रार्थितमिन्द्रियार्थानासेदुपोः सद्गुसु चित्रवत्सु ।
 प्राप्तानि दुःखान्यपि दण्डकेषु संचिन्त्यमानानि सुखान्यभूवन् ॥
Raghuvamīna,
14. ते तत्र भैम्याश्चरितानि चित्रे चित्राणि पौरः पुरि लेखितानि ।
 निरीक्ष्य निन्युर्दिवसं निशां च तत्स्वग्रसंभोगकलाविलासैः ॥
Naiṣadha, X, 35.
15. दशरथः—तन्मुच्चिसूदनसारथे ! कथय स भगवान् पौलोमीवलभो भृगुपतिचरितानि वहु मन्यते न वा ?
 मातलिः—किं नाम वहु मन्यते न वेति शृणु ; श्रावयामि—
 आस्थानसद्धनि विलासयहे विमाने
 जैत्रे रथे च सततं सुरचक्कर्ती ।
 रामस्य नित्रलिखितानि कुतूहलेन
 वरीरो विलोकयति पूर्वविचेष्टितानि ॥
 यदस्यैव पुरन्दरस्यनदनस्य चतुर्दिशं मत्तवरणीयफलकेषु रामचित्रं लिखितम् । (अङ्गुल्या निर्दिशन्) तत्तावदितो दीयतां इष्टः ।
 Then comes an exhaustive list of choice pictures depicting the important incidents in Paraśurāma's life.
Balarāmāyaṇa, Act IV.

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of private houses) serving a very useful purpose.¹⁶ We are told in the *Kathasaritsagara* that Vasavadatta consoles herself by looking at pictures of Rama's life painted on the walls.¹⁷

Of ordinary group pictures—especially of the queens and princesses with their attendants—we have an instance in the *Malavikagnimitra*¹⁸ and also in the *Viddhasalabhanjika*.¹⁹ But these and similar ones are more frequently found in the *Chitrasalas* of the harem.

General *Sringara* pictures that are to be found in any *Chitrasala*, be it public, private, or royal, are described at length in the *Naishadhiyacharita* wherein Sri Harsha states the love of sages and their amours with celestial damsels as the subjects of exquisite pictures adorning the *Chitrasala* of

16. दिअरस्स असुद्धमणस्स कुलवह णिअअकुडुलिहि आइ ।

दिअहं कहेह रामाणुलगसोभित्तिचरिआइ ॥

(देवरस्याशुद्धमनसः कुलवधूर्निजककुड्डलित्तितानि ।

दिवसं कथयति रामानुलगसोभित्रिचरितानि ॥)

Gāthāsaptaśatī, I. 35.

17. तत्र वासवदत्ता च प्रविष्टा चित्रभित्तिषु ।

पश्यन्ती रामचरिते सीतां सेहे निजव्यथाम् ॥

K. S. S. Lamb III Taranga II. 17.

18. ततश्चोपचारानन्तरमेकासनोपविष्टेन भर्त्रा चित्रगताया देव्याः परिजनं

मध्यगतामासन्नतरां(चरां) तां प्रेक्ष्य देवी पृष्ठा

Malavikāgnimitra, Act 1

19. विदूषकः—३ तस्तावल्लितस्फटिकगर्भभवनभित्तिचित्रसंस्थेसु कर्मसु

निवेश्यतां दृष्टिः । एष तावदेवो देव्या समं पाशकाभिनिवेशी

आलिखितः, एषापि ताम्बूलकरण्डवाहिनी नागवली ।

एषा चामरप्राहिणी प्रभञ्जनिका । एष रबकरण्डको नाम

वामनकः । एष पुनर्मन्दुरमर्कटः टप्परकणो नाम ।

राजा—सखे त्वमेषोऽभिलिखितः ।

Viddhasālabhañjikā, Act 1.

the imperial palace of Nala.²⁰ This description of *Sringara Chitras* is, as we have noted already, in accordance with the dictum of the *Vishnudharmottara*. Pictures of Kamadeva were kept in bedrooms and were painted in other places too,²¹ and there being no restriction and the theme being a popular one, it might have been a popular picture of the *Chitrasala*. At any rate, it should have been the principal picture of the minor *Chitrasala* of the harem going by the name of *Sayana-chitrasala*.

Bana gives us some idea of the pictures kept in public galleries. Demigods like Nagas, Suras, Asuras, Yakshas, Kinnaras, Gandharvas and so forth appear to have been prominently represented in picture.²² Designs of lovely creepers and such other decorative foliage in divers hues

20. भित्तिनित्रलिखिताविलक्षमा यत्र तस्थुरितिहाससंकथाः ।

पद्मनन्दनसुतारिरंसुतामन्दसाहसहसन्मनोभुवः ॥

पुष्पकाण्डजयडिष्टिमाथितं यत्रं गौतमकंलत्रकामिनः ।

पारदारिकविलाससाहसं देवभर्तुरुदट्टिङ्गे भित्तिषु ॥

नीतमेव करलभ्यंपारंतामप्रतीर्य मुनयस्तपोऽण्वम् ।

अप्सरःकुचघटावलम्बनात् स्थायिना क्षचन यत्र चित्रिताः ॥

Naiṣadha, XVIII. 20, 21, 26.

21. वासभवने मे शिरोभागनिहितः कामदेवपटः पाटनीयः

Kādambarī, p. 536.

प्रविवेश च द्वारपश्चलिखितरतिप्रीतिदैवतम् । Harśacarita, p. 148.

एकदेशालिखितस्तयकितरक्षाशोकतरुतलभाजाधिज्यचापेन तिर्थकूणित-
नेत्रत्रिभागेन शरमृजुकुर्वता कामदेवेनाधिष्ठितम् *Ibid.* p. 148.

सौधस्थरेसि मन्मथप्रतिकृतिः प्रासादपृष्ठे शशी

कीडाकाननवेदिकामु च पिकस्तदीर्घिकायां मद्वत् ।

इत्थं त्वद्विरहेऽधुना कृशतनोः शशासमासादन-

व्यग्राणामितरेतं रमधुमुखे तस्याः सखीनां मिथः ॥

Sringāradhanadaśataka, 61. 53.

22. मुगमुरसिद्धंगन्धविद्याधरोरगाध्यासिताभिभित्रशालाभिरविरतोत्सवप्रमदा-
वलोकनकुनूहलादभरतलादवतीर्णभिर्दिव्यविमानपद्मिभिरिवालंकृता ।

Kādambarī, p. 99.

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seem to have added to the collections of the picture house.²³ Subjects of the three worlds as comprising picture themes are specifically stated by him.²⁴

Subjects of a general nature seem to have had their own place in the *Chitrasala*. Gay scenes like *jalakrida*, *panagosthi*, *rasalila* and the like cannot be considered too impossible as themes when we have Padmagupta specially talking of hunting scenes as adorning the walls of the picture gallery.²⁵ In the *Sahridayananda* too there is a mention made by Krishnananda to paintings of hunters.²⁶

Apart from these, animal and bird studies appear to have been a distinct feature in the art houses as is evidenced by the *Raghuvamsha*²⁷ the *Vikramankadevacarita*²⁸ and the *Kadambari*,²⁹ and elephants were favourite subjects with the artists.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHITRASALA

Before we consider the structure of the *Chitrasala* according to the *Narada-silpa* and try to make head or tail

- 23. आलेख्यागृहैरिव बहुवर्णचित्रपत्रशकुनिशतसंशोभितैः: *Ibid.* p. 241.
 - 24. चित्रलेखादशीतविचित्रसकलत्रिभुवनाकाराम् *Ibid.* p. 176.
 - 25. कदाचिल्लोचनातिथ्यमासेनालेख्यवेशमनि ।
स मृगव्याविनोदेन पसृजो पार्थिवो हृदि ॥
- Navasāhasāṅkacarita*, II. 1.
- 26. चित्रार्पितेभ्योऽपि विभेषि पूर्वं वनेचेरेभ्यो दमयन्ति येभ्यः !
तैव सार्धे विहरिष्यन्ति त्वं कथं पुलिन्दीवं वनस्थलीषु ॥
- Sahṛdayānanda*, IX. 31.
- 27. चित्रद्विपाः पश्चवनांवितीर्णाः करेणुभिर्दत्तमृणालभङ्गाः ।
नखाङ्कुशाशातविभिन्नाकुम्भाः संरब्धसिंहप्रदृतं वहन्ति ॥
- Raghuvamsha*, XVI. 16.
- 28. आकान्तरिपुचकेण चक्रकोटपतेः परम् ।
लिखिताभित्रशालासु तेनामुच्यन्त दन्तिनः ॥
- Vikramankadevacarita*, IV. 30.
- 29. आलेख्यगृहैरिव बहुवर्णचित्रपत्रशकुनिशतसंशोभितैः:
दिवसावसानेषु विश्लेषभीता मृणालसौभ्रित्रभित्तिविलिखितानि चक्रवाक-
भिषुनानि संषटयति ।
- Kadambari*, p. 241.
Ibid. p. 446.

out of the cumbrous and corrupt text which fortunately is preserved for us at least in that form, we shall try to see what idea of a picture house we can get through references to it in Sanskrit literature. The very earliest reference to the *Chitrasala* is perhaps in the *Ramayana*. The picturesque and gorgeous description of the mighty city Lanka with its towers and temples, mansions and palaces, gardens and bowers, gateways and ramparts, fortresses and citadels, pools and ponds, lakelets and lotuses—in all, one of the very best of exquisite poetic composition and fancy in the vast realm of Sanskrit literature, and it would not be too much to say in the world's literature too—enumerates the *Chitrasala* amongst other pleasure-houses of the imperial palace and Pushpaka of Ravana.³⁰ But unfortunately we are not given anything about the structure of the picture house in particular.

So then, we turn to other avenues for information. Bana describes the *Chitrasala* as built in the style of a *Vimana*³¹ quite in conformity with the text of the *Narada-silpa* that gives the building as ornamented by a small *gopura* in the front and having *sikhara-kalasas* etc., thus satisfying the *lakshana* of a *vimana*. The word *vithi*³² used by Phavabhuti is the exact word for gallery and is striking and suggestive of the long and spacious nature of the picture hall. We have it stated in

30. लतागृहाणि चित्राणि चित्रशालागृहाणि च ॥
क्रीडागृहाणि चान्यानि दारुपर्वतकानपि ।
कामस्य गृहकं रम्यं दिवागृहकमेव च ॥
ददर्श राक्षसेन्द्रस्य रावणस्य निवेशने ।

Sundarakāṇḍa, Sarga VI, 36-37-38.

31. सुरासुरतिद्वगन्धर्वविद्याधरोरगाध्यासिताभिश्चित्रशालाभिरविरतोत्प्रमदा-
वलोकनकुनूहलादम्बरतलादवतीर्णभिर्दिव्यविमानपङ्किभिरवालंकृता ।

Kādambārī, p. 99.

32. लक्ष्मणः—आर्य ! अर्जुनेन चित्रकरेणास्मद्गुपरिष्ठमार्यस्य चरितमस्य
वीथ्यामभिलिखितम् । तत्पश्यत्वार्थः । Uttararāmacarita, Act I.

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the *Uttararamacharita* that the *Chitrasala* has windows.³² Surely light and pure air are the two essentials for any living creature and the lack of these in any building would rank it with a dungeon; and a dearth of windows in a chamber of joy and beauty would be quite unworthy of its grace. The *Udayasundarikatha* tells us that the *Chitrasala* has big massy pillars to support it.³⁴ From the *Ratnavali* we gather that the *torana* or the ornamental doorway and the *valabhi*, the top-most part of the building, are all worked and decorated in ivory;³⁵ that the *Dantavalabhika* is painted with pictures on ivory is information given by the *Tilakamanjari*.³⁶ The *Vrishabhanuja* talks of the *angana* or verandah of the *Chitrasala* as being ornamented.³⁷ Thus putting all this together we have the idea of a *Chitrasala*, a long and spacious building built in the *Vimana* style with big massive pillars supporting it, windows for ventilation, the main entrance ornamented

33. रामः—प्रिये, वातायनोपकण्ठे संविष्टा भव ।

Uttararamacarita, Act I.

Sītā is fatigued after looking at all the pictures in the citrāśālā and is advised by Rāma to take rest near the windows of the picture-house and enjoy fresh air.

34. ऊरुस्तम्भवतीं चित्रशालिकामिव रतिनिवासाय कल्पिताम् ।

Udayasundarikathā, p. 133.

35. काञ्छनमालां— (परिक्रम्यावलोक्य) कथमत्रैष खलु भर्तास्वस्थतामिषेण मदनावस्थां प्रच्छादयन्दन्ततोरणवलभ्या उपर्युपविष्टिष्टिष्टिः । तदेहि एनं वृत्तान्तं भञ्ज्ये निवेदयामः । *Ratnāvali*, Act III.

36. अश्रान्तकालागुरुधूपधूमभयपलायमानदन्तवलभिकाभित्तिचित्रानिव चित्रितमयूखजालकमुच्चो माणिक्यजालकान् कलयद्विरद्भुताकारैरनेकभूमिकाभ्राजिष्णुभिः सौधैः प्रवर्तिताविरतचन्द्रोदया अयोध्येति यथार्थमिधाना नगरी । *Tilakamanjari*, p. 7.

37. सखि ! विहस्तिके ! किमभिहिता तदा चित्रशालिकाङ्गणमलंकुर्वत्या देव्या स्वम् । *Vṛṣabhanujā*, Act IV.

'Alamkurvatyā' might mean both 'adorning the place by her presence' and 'adorning the place by means of Raṅgoli etc'.

with ivory work, with its top all worked in painted ivory and with a big verandah about the hall.

We shall now see what the *Narada-silpa* gives us.²⁸ In the heart of the city or in a building situated where four main roads meet, opposite a temple or royal palace, to the east of rich mansions or in the centre of the king's highway, is to be erected the *Chitrasala*. A suitable spot of five, six, seven, eight or sometimes ten and even twelve *sutras* should be selected for the *Chitrasala* of either the king or the people. It may be built in the shape of *Mandala* (drum) or might be circular. It should have, besides one main entrance, some other doorways. The verandah about it should be double-

38. अथ पुनश्चित्रशालानिर्माणक्रममुदाहरिष्याम इत्याह भगवान् नारदः—

- नगराणां मध्यमे^१ भागे चतुष्पथकवास्तुभागे कचिदथो प्रासादनिकां पुरोभागे भवनानां वाहो पूर्वभवनिकामयो राजवीथीमध्यभागे चित्रशालां स्थापयेयुरिति होशीनरः । क्षात्राणां वाहो प्राजापत्यानां सूत्राणां पञ्चकं वाहो षट्कं सप्तकमष्टकमयो कचित् दशकं द्वादशकमिति क्रमात् नीत्वा स्त्रीकृत्य स्थलमुत्तमं व्यासं व्यासहीनकं वाहो मर्दलाकारं माण्डलिकमिह वै द्वारोपद्वारकमेकानेकानं द्विद्विभागाङ्गमुपशालालिन्दकमूर्ध्यभागप्रवेशनं मध्यतिर्यङ्गमध्यशालाक्षेपणकं दण्डिकाकृतिकं वा प्रपाकृतिकं द्वार्चित्यादकमयो विशातिपादकमयो पोडशाढ्यकं मध्यशालावेदिकाप्रवेशनकसोपानवंशद्वारकं मध्यशालावेदिकाप्रवेशनकसोपानवंशद्वारकं वैशेषिकशालां काल्पनिकं वा पूर्वभागे दाण्डिकरूपं वा सहवातायनचित्रवितानं नानालंकारभासुरं नानालिन्दकाल्पनिकं चित्रशालायाः नानामास्यकं सर्वत्र उपशालाद्वृतं कचित् समाश्रं कचिन्निषणवेदिकं नानासनयुक्तं सहशिखरकलशचित्रप्रस्तरयुतमयो कचित् पार्श्वसोपानकं कचित् मुखमध्रुकप्रतिमुखमध्रुकमूर्धकूटकमूर्ध्यशालाकं वाहो कचिदन्तः स्थले पृथुवारान्तिके वाहो महावारान्तिके महामुकुरस्थापनाङ्गरोरेखिकं सर्वतुष्ठिकरकाल्पनिकं नानादीपस्तम्भकं पुरोभागे प्राथमिके कचित् क्षुद्रगोपुरोद्धासुरं स्थापयेयुर्नानास्त्रप्रित्रकमनोहरं देवगन्धर्वकिन्नरमुखानां नानासमयविहारिकाणां महिमवतामन्येण वै कचित् यथामानं बदुर्वर्णभासुरं सौवर्णादिविभूगिताङ्गमित्याह भगवान् नारदः ॥

Nārada Silpa, Pāṭha 66, Citrasālālakṣaṇakathana.

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sized and there should be a smaller hall, a square terrace at its door with a flight of steps leading up to the upper storey, with a main centre-hall and side-halls. It might be clubshaped or shaped after a drinking hall, and should possess sixteen, twenty or thirty-two pillars, with a staircase ending near a doorway leading to the centre-hall with a large seat thereabouts. It should have an artificial clubshaped special hall towards the east. It should further possess windows and be ornamented by a highly picturesque canopy; should have many square terraces about its entrances, many smaller halls, many seats (for seating visitors) and stairs sideways leading up. It should further be beautified by an ornamented roofing and ceiling and have *Sikhara-kalasas* at the top (in the form of a *Vimana*). In its upper hall, in an inner spot or near the main door, a big mirror is to be placed and highly pleasing artificial chandeliers should illumine the hall. The main building should be ornamented by a small *Gopura* and in the hall should be kept different pleasing patterns of pictures of such Demigods as Devas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras and so forth, and also pictures of mighty men that made a mark in different fields of action, all worked in proper proportions and coloured variously and luminously with jewels all in gold. Thus spake Bhagavan Narada.

This in main is the cumbrous description of a *Chitrasala* that we get from the *Narada-silpa*. The main features to be noticed here are the sidesteps and a main flight of stairs all leading up to a centre hall wherein the picture-gallery is arranged. There are some sidehalls and other minor halls. Apart from the main entrance we have some doorways and a lot of squares opposite. The main building has a *gopura* and *Sikhara-kalasas*. It rests on sixteen, twenty, or thirty-two pillars and has fairly large verandahs about it. The main hall is beautified with a big mirror placed in the inner recess directly opposite the main entrance or near the main door itself. Numbers of chandeliers light up the chamber and comfort is afforded the visitors by an arrangement of the *Vitardi* or the seats. The *Chitrasala* may be of various shapes,

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Danda, Prapa, Mandala, Mandalika and so on. This is in fact the whole of the cumbrous details in a nutshell. It is left to the reader to compare the information on the *Chitrasala* given in the *Narada-silpa* with that got from general literature. The verandah, steps, entrance, hall, windows, pillars are all there. The only thing is we have a more elaborate description in the *silpa* text.

GENERAL REMARKS

It is now time enough for us to consider some general points of interest. The *Tilakamanjari* tells us that the *Chitrasala* was generally highly perfumed to spread an aroma about the chamber and to add to the joyous atmosphere.³³ From the *Karpuramanjari* we know that the picture galleries (those of the palace) were opened in the evenings.³⁴ The commentary gives us that *Abhisarikas* and the hetaira—this is suggested by the word *adi* in *Abhisarikadi*—gathered there at dusk, the latter perhaps to exhibit the movement of their agile limbs in dance before the king.³⁵ From a verse in the *Natachampani* of Trivikrama we gather that inhabitants of cities with an aesthetic taste resorted to *Chitrasalas* in the

39. चित्रशालास्वसंपाद्यमानहरिचन्दनपङ्कोपलेपनम् ।

Tilakamanjari, p. 34.

40. उम्घाडीअन्ति॒.लीलामणिमअवलहीचित्तभत्तीणिवेसा॑

पङ्कां किंकरीहि॒ रिदुममअसुहा॑ वित्थरिज्जन्ति॒ ज्ञाति॑ ।

सेरन्धीलोलहस्ताङ्गुलिचलणवसा॑ पद्मादी॑ पउद्धो॑

हुकारो॑ मण्डपेषु॑ विलसदि॑ मधुरो॑ रुद्धुरुज्ज्ञाणम् ॥ .

(उद्धाव्यन्ते॑ लीलामणिमथवलभीचित्ताभित्तिनिवेशाः॑

पर्यङ्काः॑ किंकरीभिः॑ क्रन्तुसमयसुवा॑ विस्तार्यन्ते॑ ज्ञाटिति॑ ।

सेरन्धीलोलहस्ताङ्गुलिचलनवाशात्॑ पद्मनादः॑ प्रवृत्तो॑

हुकारो॑ मण्डपेषु॑ विलसति॑ मधुरो॑ रुद्धुष्टाङ्गनानाम् ॥

Karpuramanjari, p. 37.

41. चित्रभित्तिनिवेशाभित्रगद्धाः॑ | ते॑ उद्धाव्यन्ते॑ | अभिसारिकाद्यभित्तिरणार्थम्॑ |

etc.

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company of their women in the *Sarat* season.⁴² From this it appears that autumn was part of the year chosen for spending time gaily in witnessing pictures in art galleries in India.

So far we have been talking of stationary art galleries. We have now to consider another type of the same, but peripatetic. The *Nalachampū* talks of travelling art galleries.⁴³ This was perhaps to exhibit the best works of the artists of one country in another, thus to keep up a constant intercourse and mutual exchange of ideas. The itinerant nature of buildings like the *Chitrasalas* is warranted by other writings talking of moving houses and we have Rajasekhara speaking of a travelling bed-chamber.⁴⁴ Any way the idea of a moving *Chitrasala* in ancient India can be nothing so strange to us when we are accustomed to the notion of travelling libraries in our modern life.

In conclusion it must be stated, however, that the *Chitrasala* was only the building where art was concentrated, so to say. It does not mean that other apartments and buildings were bereft of pictures and decoration. The *Gadyachinta-*

42. धन्याः शरदि सेवन्ते प्रोलसच्चित्रशालिकान् ।
प्रासादान् स्त्रीसत्त्वाः पौरा: केदारांश्च कृषीवलाः ॥

Nalacampū, p. 40.

- Cf. स कदाचिच्छरत्काले सोध्मण्युन्मदवारणे ।
राजहंसपरीवारे सोत्सवानन्दितप्रजे ॥
आत्मनुल्यगुणे रन्तु चित्रप्रासादमाविशत् ।
आकृष्टकमलामोदवहन्मारुतशीतलम् ॥

Kathāsaritsāgara, Lambaka 9, Tarāṅga 5, Sls. 33, 34.

43. तत्क्षणादुत्तमितैः प्रेक्षत्पत्तिकापटपल्लवविराजितैः प्रयाणयोग्ययन्त्र-
चित्रशालागृहैः संचारिणि गन्धर्वनगर इव रमणीये.....जाते.....
शिविरसंनिवेशे

Nalacampū, p. 195.

44. कारुणिः कारितं तेन कृत्रिमं स्वप्रहेतवे ।
सुषिरस्तम्भसञ्चारं नृपतेवासमन्दिरम् ॥
तदहमपि सुषिरस्तम्भसञ्चारं वासगृहं निर्मितवतां तथाविधां च रक्तवर्तीं
चतुर्भिकां करिष्यतां शिल्पवतां मन्त्रिसमादिष्टं दापथितुं महाभाण्डागारं
प्रति यास्यामि ।

Viddhasālabhaṇjikā, Act I.

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mani mentions Saraswati's picture as adorning the library hall⁴⁵ and the *Vidyamandapa* as filled with pictures of *Yama-loka* ;⁴⁶ the *Kadambari* talks of pictures of the *Sutikagriha*⁴⁷ and we have other apartments all filled with pictures. The *Natyasastra* of Bharata, the *Abhilashitarthachintamani* and the *Sivalattvaratnakara* speak of the *Natyasala* as profusely decorated with pictures.⁴⁸ The chapter on *chitra* in the

45. दुर्घजलिष्ठेनधबलवितानविभ्राजिनि विराजमानसरस्वतीप्रतिमाञ्चित-
चित्रपटे सञ्चितसकलग्रन्थकोशे....महति विद्यामण्डपे.... ...
Gadyacintāmaṇi, p. 35.
46. भित्तिलिखितचित्रदर्शितसुकृतेतरपरिपाकफलभवप्रवन्धप्रचुरभक्तिप्रेरितभव्य -
सार्थप्रस्त्यमानसंस्तवकलकलमुखरितवियति महति विद्या-
मण्डपे.... ...
Ibid. p. 34.
47. . . प्रत्यग्लिखितमङ्गल्यालेख्योज्ज्वलितभित्तिभागमनोहारिणि....
Kādāmbārī, p. 136.
48. भित्तिध्वथ विलिसासु परिमृष्टासु सर्वतः ।
सभासु जातशोभासु चित्रकर्म प्रयोजयेत् ॥
चित्रकर्मणि चालेख्याः पुरुषाः स्त्रीजनास्तथा ।
लतावन्धाश्च कर्तव्याश्चरितं चात्मभोगजम् ॥
एवं विकृष्टं कर्तव्यं नाथ्यवेशम प्रयोक्तृभिः ।

Nātyāśāstra Chap. II, Sls. 88, 89, 90.
Explaining लतावन्ध Abhinavagupta adds this comment.

लतावन्धा द्रमिडाभिनयसञ्जिवेशा वा मालात्यदिलतागता वातोय-
वेष्टनवैचित्र्यप्रकारा वा वश्यमाणपिण्डीवन्धप्रकाराश्च ।

ब्रुवे नाटकशालाया निर्माणस्य क्रमं शृणु ।

सुधाधवलितं रम्यं वास्तुलक्षणसंयुतम् ॥

जालमार्गकृतोद्यानं क्वापि सर्वप्रकाशकम् ।

क्वापि संतमसोपेतं मणिदीपप्रकाशितम् ॥

दण्ठिदण्ठिविनिर्माणमत्तवारणशोभितम् ।

सौर्वज्ञस्तम्भरुचिरं चन्दनस्तम्भगनिधितम् ॥

रत्नस्तम्भकृतावासं प्रवालस्तम्भरञ्जितम् ।

काचकुट्टिमरोचिण्यु स्फटिकोज्ज्वलकुट्टिमम् ॥

मुधाकुट्टिमकोपतं स्फुटदर्ढककुट्टिमम् ।

स्फटिकोपलविन्यासदर्पणाकारभित्तिमत् ॥

ANCIENT INDIAN ART GALLERIES

Abhilashitarthachintamani finds a place in that book, as a section dealing with an essential beautifying factor of the *Natyasala*. The case is the same even in the *Sivatattvaratnakara* which bases itself on the text of the *Abhilashitarthachintamani*. After all it cannot be denied that India was saturated with art and it would be idle to contend that the very existence of a *Chitrasala* accounts for the restriction of art to it. It was more particularly to be found in the *Chitragara* and generally found in a lesser degree everywhere else. Anyway the value of the *Chitragriha* as a *Vinodasthana* was fully recognised by our ancients and it was given its own place in the life of an aesthetic citizen, *Nagaraka*.

विचित्रचित्रसंयुक्तप्रमोदप्रदभित्तिमत् ।
एवमार्श्यजनकं किञ्चिन्निर्मापयेदगृहम् ॥
प्रगल्भैर्मावतत्त्वसैः सूक्ष्मरेखाविशारदैः ।
विद्वाद्विर्मानकुशलैश्चित्रलेखनकोविदैः ॥
वर्णपूरणदक्षेभ्य मिथ्ये च कृतभ्रामैः ।
चित्रकैलेखयेचित्रं नानारससमुद्धवम् ॥

Abhilashitarthacintamani and *Sivatattvaratnakara*.

Yaksha Gana

By V. RAGHAVAN, B.A. (Hons.)

To the vast indigenous theatre of India, the contribution of South Canara is the 'Yaksha Gana,' the Kannada cognate of the 'Kathakali' of Malabar, the 'Yaksha Gana', the street-play, and the 'Bhagavata-mela-nataka' of Tamilnad and Andhra; and outside, of the 'Lalita' of Maharashtra, the 'Bhavai' of Gujarat and the 'Yatra' of Bengal. The origin of these various provincial theatres of the people is not very clear. As we see them now, so far as the South Indian forms at least are concerned, they are completely cast in the mould and technique of the Sanskrit *Natya* and *Sangitasāstra*. The Sanskrit drama was performed, as can be seen from Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, in an operatic manner with the added effects of music, dance, and gesture-representation. This can be seen also from a fortunate survival of the fourth act of Kalidasa's *Vikramorvasiya* in certain recensions, which shows us the way in which classic Sanskrit dramas were handled by the artistes of the theatre when they were actually performed. In later times there arose a vast Sanskrit operatic dramatic literature in all parts of India which the Sanskrit dramaturgist would class among the 'Uparupakas.' In Mithila there was a crop of such dramas in Sanskrit in one act, and with songs in Prakrit all through. One such piece is the *Parijatha-harana-nataka* of Poet Umapati who flourished under a king of Tirthut who ruled between A.D. 1304 and 1324.¹ The construction of this drama resembles that of the South Indian vernacular musical plays of 'Yaksha Gana' or 'Nataka' in Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada. The Kashmerian Sanskrit poet Damodaragupta of a very much earlier age, the ninth century, speaks in his work *Kuttanimata* of a type of drama and of its actors which correspond closely to conditions available in

¹This play has been edited with English translation and notes by Sir George Grierson in the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. III (1917), Part I.

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South India.¹ Very much later, similar Sanskrit musical plays were produced during the reign of the Telugu and the Mahratta rulers at Tanjore and these plays are preserved in the Tanjore MSS. library. This Sanskrit literature of musical plays is here referred to because the popular Tamil, Telugu, and Kanarese drama called 'Yaksha Gana' or 'Nataka' is mostly of the same nature.

The Yaksha Gana can be taken to be the common name of an old type of traditional, popular vernacular drama of South India, a name common to the three linguistic areas of Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada and absent only in Malayalam. In subsequent times the name Yaksha Gana gave place to the two names 'Nataka' and 'Vilasa,' in Tamilnad and Andhra, but it continued in South Canara. In the Madras and Tanjore MSS. libraries there are many Tamil and Telugu Yaksha Ganas, though none of them can be dated beyond the eighteenth century. Of its history in South Canara E. P. Rice says: 'A class of books very largely in demand consists of stories from the epics and puranas in a new literary form which sprang up in the eighteenth century and is called Yaksha Gana. It is a sort of dramatic composition suitable for recitation before rustic audiences by professional and amateur actors.'² The Yaksha Gana seems to be named after the form of music employed in it which is said to be originally called 'Yaksha Gana.' What this particular kind of music is I have not been able to know, though I asked Kanarese scholars and critics of music about it. I was informed that 'Yaksha Gana' is the older type of music and that in course of time later song forms like 'Kirtana' as in the Tamil 'Natakas' came to be introduced. Though the name Yaksha Gana is Sanskrit, it is almost absent in the vast Sanskrit literature on 'Natya' and 'Sangita.' There is a single reference to it in an important Sanskrit music treatise of Tanjore, the *Sangita Sudha* of Govinda Dikshita

¹ *Kuttanimata*, Verse 800. See also Tanusukha Rama Sarma's Commentary, page 286 where he speaks of the Gujarathi *Bhavaia*.

² Kanarese Literature, Heritage of India Series. (Page 100)

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written about A. D. 1628, which says that an earlier treatise attributed to Anjaneya has taken into account the type of music sung by the Yakshas (*yakshaugha gitam api gana sailim*). The Tamil Natya literature having numberless odd names does not mention the word Yaksha Gana, though the Tamil lexicons say that Yakshas are semi-divine beings like Gandharvas and that they are players on the 'veena.' It is throwing wide open the floodgates of guess and imagination, if we suppose from this that the Yaksha Gana developed from minstrelsy songs sung to the accompaniment of the 'veenas.' As far as the Andhra is concerned, I am informed by Brahmasri Veturi Prabhakara Sastri, Telugu Pandit in the Madras MSS. Library, that round about Guntur there exists a community of people called 'Yakshas' or 'Zakkulu' devoted to the arts of music and dance, and it is suggested that this drama came to be called after the caste of the people playing it. The Pandit also says that the Yaksha Gana might have developed out of court panegyrics or the glorifying of the deity of the local temple and that the folk-songs 'Ela,' 'Jhola,' (the Tamil 'Lali' or 'Oonjal' i.e., the swing-song) 'Dhavala,' 'Sobhana,' 'Suval' (the paddy-husker's song) etc., must have been utilised for the Yaksha Gana. On examination I found a Ms. Tamil Yaksha Gana also to contain 'Sobhana' songs. But most available specimens of Tamil and Telugu Yaksha Gana and 'Nataka' alike contain only uncharacterised and unnamed songs called generally 'darus' in various 'ragas' and 'talas.' Therefore there is no perceptible difference between an Yaksha Gana and a 'Nataka,' both of which are composed in the same style, in 'padas' (songs) in various 'ragas' and 'talas,' in 'padyas' (verses) in various metres, and in 'vachana' (prose), often short in nature. Mr. Prabhakara Sastri gave me also the only reference to the Yaksha Gana in Telugu works on Poetics. The *Appakaviyam* written about three hundred years ago says that the 'Ragada' metre, when cut at different stops at the end, fits in with different 'gatis' and 'talas' and that this is utilised for the songs in the Yaksha

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Gana. The 'Ragada' (Kanarese : 'Ragale') is a huge and long metre having numerous feet from which is derived the popular usage of 'Ragalai' as a word meaning 'tumult.' This 'Ragada' is an old type of musical composition met with under the name Rahadi in the *Sangita Ratnakara* of Sarngadeva (A. D. 1210-1247.) where it is described as a multi-footed composition suited to 'Veera rasa.' Similarly the previously-mentioned songs 'Ela,' 'Dhavala' etc., are also traceable in earlier Sanskrit music treatises.

There is a strange correspondence to this South Indian name of Yaksha Gana in Nepal where the vernacular drama of a similar nature is called by a very similar name, the 'Gandharva Gana.'¹ There is a Nepalese vernacular operatic dramatic literature in Nepal from the time of King Jagajyotir-malla of Nepal (A.D. 1617—33.) who himself pioneered in the creation of this literature.

II

The Yaksha Gana belongs to South Canara in the Kannada area, where other forms of Natya like Nautch must have flourished in other places. For it is the Karnataka country that has named our South Indian music and dance as 'Karnatic.' In South Canara, the Yaksha Gana is one of the two most widespread popular dramatic entertainments, the other being the puppet-play, called as in Tamil by the name 'Bommalattam.' The vernacular name of the Yaksha Gana is 'Bayal Attam,' i.e., open-air play, a name which corresponds to the Tamil 'Terukkoottu' and the Telugu 'Veethingataka' both of which mean street-play. The Yaksha Gana troupes are attached to particular shrines, even as at the villages of Oottukkadu etc., in Tanjore district, where the 'Bhagavata' troupes play only at the temples.² As at the Andhra Kuchipudi and at the above-said Tamil

¹ See Parvatiya Udyaram Davral's Sanskrit Introduction to the Benares Edition of Vararuchi's Prakrit Grammar, (Page v) where he mentions as instances of vernacular dramatic literature the *Yatra* of Bengal, the *Gandharva Gana* of Nepal and the *Dance of Harischandra* etc., of Kurmachala.

² See Kuttanimata, verse 800; *Kama Sutra* of Vatsayayana, I. iv. 28—32 and Triveni, Vol. V. No. 4., my article on Theatre Architecture—ii.

villages, the actors of Yaksha Gana in South Canara are also called 'Bhagavatars' and a set and a performance by them is called a 'Mela.' Unlike the Tamil 'Bhagavatars' referred to, the Yaksha Gana players of South Canara travel from place to place and people even pray to their gods in times of distress that they will order an Yaksha Gana performance as offering. Last year two sets of South Canara Yaksha Gana players, the 'South Canara Yaksha Gana Dramatic Company' and the 'Sri Perudur Anantapadmanabha Swami Dasavataram Company,' visited Madras and this account of mine of Yaksha Gana is mainly based on the performances they gave in Madras.

III

The themes of all the dramas of Yaksha Gana are fights and warfare, stories of 'veera' and 'raudra' *rasas* from our puranic legends. In 'Girija Kalyana,' Parvati's wedding, the love-incident forms but the central event in a long drama beginning with the destruction of Daksha's sacrifice by the terrific Veerabhadra and ending with the boy-War-God Kumara annihilating demon Taraka and his hordes. 'Valinigraha,' 'Draupadi-pratapa,' 'Bhishma-Vijaya,' 'Virata-parva' or 'Keechaka-vadha,' 'Karna-Arjuna-yuddha,' 'Atikaya vadha,' are some of the other plays, all of which are stories of fight and war. In this respect the 'Yaksha Gana' differs from the Tamil and Telugu varieties which do not specialise in fights, but resembles the Kathakali of Malabar—which is also 'Tandavic' in the main. The actors roar and do robust dances in weird costumes. The drums are beaten loudly and 'veera' and 'raudra' *rasas* are portrayed most successfully. The make-up of the Rakshasas and other wild characters is in keeping with this atmosphere. In the play called 'Draupadi-pratapa,' it is a very effective, powerful and wonderful scene which forms the climax of the drama at its end. Chandi and Kali appear in terrific attire, roar, and upon a background of war-beats on a drum in the orchestra at the back, they wheel round in a hand-to-hand fight. It



GANAPATI PRABHU (leading male roles).



ANNAYYA.



Photo by
D. S. GOWDA
MADRAS



KUSHTAPPA (wierd roles).



CANDAYYA.



KITTAPPA.

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shows how well the *rasas* could be evoked without all the realistic trappings of scenery etc., of the modern stage. Similarly, in the 'Girija Kalyana,' the scene in which Siva gets angry, roars, strikes the earth and creates the terrible Veerabhadra to destroy Daksha's sacrifice, is a thrilling show. But 'Lasya' is not absent in Yaksha Gana, for a theme has to be of varied interest. There is 'Lasya' in 'Bhishma-Vijaya' where the princesses bathe, and the 'Rukmangada' has some fine playing of 'Sringara' or love between King Rukmangada and Mohini. But the prevailing atmosphere is the 'Arabhati Vritti,' the forceful manner. Even a play like 'Rukmangada,' whose *rasa* is the quietistic 'Santa,' is played in such a manner as to contain mostly fights, and this is done by the introduction of the conquest expeditions ('Digvijaya') of the crown prince, who defeats various kings, Asuras and God Yama. The clown has great liberty and he is responsible for too much *ex tempore* comic speech appearing often. In the themes that are mainly puranic, occasional inventions occur and the 'Draupadi-pratapa' is a fine specimen of an imaginative creation spun out of a puranic nucleus. On the whole, they play about fifty dramas : the whole of the 'Ramayana' and the 'Mahabharata' done episode by episode, as also other plays.

IV

Surely, the Yaksha Gana make-up is as epic as its theme. It is decidedly more graceful, richer and more closely related to the ornamentation found in our sculpture than the Kathakali make-up. The chief male characters, the hero and his son, or the king and his minister or prince, have a fine 'Makuta,' and together with other characters belonging to the sublime type called 'Maha-purusha' and 'Dhirodatta,' have a uniform kind of exalted make-up with 'Bhujakirti,' 'Kataka,' 'Virakaccha etc.' (Fig. 1) The head-dress of the wild characters, the 'Dhiroddhatus,' is of a different type, an arch-like head-dress which is prepared then and there on each occasion. (Figs. 2 and 3). The 'Prati Nayaka' or the

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villain, Rakshassas, Asuras and God Yama appear in the most weird dress of the Yaksha Gana. Their 'Makuta' is bigger and is of wood studded with glass and somewhat resembles some of the Kathakali head-gears. King Salva in 'Bhishma-vijaya,' Mahishasura and Yama in 'Rukmangada,' and Ravana in 'Atikayavadha' appear in this dress. (Fig. 4). The face is masked; the lip hangs low and red; there are two carnivorous teeth; the nose is enlarged with some white matter; and long locks of hair hanging behind complete this male weird dress. There is a corresponding female weird dress; Chandi and Kali in 'Draupadi-pratapa,' and Surpanakha in 'Atikayavadha' appear in it. (Fig. 5). Lion's teeth, blood-red artificial tongue drawn-out and dangling, huge breasts and lengthy locks of hair at the back characterise this female weird make-up. All the actors wear trousers to enable them to dance and over them a 'saree' is tied in the form of a 'Kaccha' with girdle ornaments. The faces of kings and princes have a rosy paint; king Bali appears with a green face, Yama with a black one, and Krishna and Vishnu, blue. Hunters appear in some plays like the 'Rukmangada' and the 'Bhishma-vijaya' and they tie to their bodies some amount of green twigs to suggest that they are forest people: they first make a bonfire and dance round it before their action begins. All royal characters have a bow and arrow in their hands: Vishnu and Krishna bring a 'chakra' (disc), and Narada a bunch of peacock feathers. The costume of Narada has been modernised, and along with it that of the women characters also to a very large extent. In the midst of old picturesque make-up, the heroine now appears discordantly dressed up in modern make-up imitative of coquettish society women appearing on the modern stage. The old female make-up was full of old jewellery with 'Makuta' or 'Kirita' etc. resembling female figures in our sculpture. The make-up includes masks also. In 'Girija Kalyana,' Daksha appears after Veerabhadra's onslaught with a mask of a sheep's head. I am told that Jatayu, the great eagle appearing in the 'Ramayana' is similarly made up with

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an eagle-mask and huge feathers. Much of their elaborate make-up which they use in the performances in their own plays, the players did not bring to Madras. The colour scheme of the dress cannot be realised by seeing the photographs reproduced here. The dresses are mostly in red colour, dull as well as deep, with a lot of dazzling lace all over.

V

The traditional Sanskrit play and its vernacular representatives begin with some preliminary benedictory music and dance called in Sanskrit 'purva ranga.' As detailed by Bharata, not only its more variegated variety called the 'Chitra-purva-ranga' but also its more simple form called 'Suddha-purva-ranga' was very elaborate. It is well known that the Kathakali of Malabar has its own 'purva-ranga,' the 'Todayam,' 'Purappadu,' 'Melappadam' etc. A traditional Yaksha Gana starts something like a Tamil 'Terukkottu.' There is first the worship of God Vighnesvara, the remover of obstacles, within the green room itself, with a song on this God. The 'Karpura Nirajana' shown to the God is then 'taken' by the actors, the chorist and the drummers. After this 'Ganapati Prarthana,' the Chorist Bhagavatar, along with the player on the 'mridanga,' comes to the open space outside that enclosed for the green room. He takes his stand at the back end of the space and sings the praise of God Subrahmanya, brother of Ganapati. The next item is the entrance of two boys in typical male costume: they dance while certain 'vandana' slokas or benedictory verses from Sanskrit hymns are recited. Then two female characters appear and do some graceful dance ('Lasya'), first from within the curtain and then outside. They retire and the Bhagavatar (the musician) gives us the 'Kathapeethika,' the prologue to the coming story corresponding to the Sanskrit 'sthapana' which mentions the drama, opens it and introduces the first characters. The play then begins. Each actor enters dancing, exchanges a few words with a musician, who now

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and then talks with the actors and makes comments and asks every new character who he is ; and the actors thus announce themselves, and whenever a new character entered a scene having other personalities, the habit was, in the days when there was no electric or gas light and the play was played on the paddy field or the street corner with two men standing at the two front ends with a blazing fire brand ('Tivatti ') in their hands, that the old character on the scene came to one end, caught hold of the hand of the light-keeper, directed the light to the newly entering character, acted the action of one who looked at and turning to the audience showed his awareness of the new arrival. But now, the actors come to one end and identify the new arrivals in the same manner, though the gas light has removed the man with the firebrand.

VI

The Yaksha Gana must have originally been a faithful form of Bharata's theatre in respect of 'Abhinaya.' As was to be seen till recently in Tamil street-plays, 'Abhinaya' or 'Nritya' must have been present to a large extent in the Yaksha Gana. But now, it has become considerably reduced, chiefly on account of the introduction of speech in an elaborate manner. It is in this respect that it differs from the Kathakali of Malabar and resembles the Tamil variety. In the Tamil play, the whole theme is in the form of songs and verses both of which are sung. There are occasional prose lines which the chorus-like 'Kattiyakkaran' speaks, conveying information to the audience about what follows next and giving similar links. In a way the Yaksha Gana as it has developed now, has approached the modern drama in having a lot of prose dialogue which the actors themselves speak. When the actors stop the speech, the musical theme is sung, and while it is sung the ancient practice must have been to render every word of it through 'Abhinaya' as in Kathakali and Nautch. Still, there are places in the Yaksha Gana even today which are full of 'Abhinaya.' In 'Bhishma-vijaya,' King Salva, and in 'Atikayavadha,' Ravana

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enter with elaborate dance, perform ablution, wear holy ashes and worship 'Sivalinga'—all in 'Abhinaya.' Similarly Amba, Ambika, and Ambalika, the three princesses in 'Bhishma-vijaya,' do bathing in Ganges in 'Abhinaya.' In other places also where there are, unlike the two cases above-mentioned, speeches by actors, there is some amount of 'Abhinaya' of the hand. Many actors give suitable 'hastas' or 'mudras' for the ideas occurring in their speech. I could note the 'sikhara' hand, the 'katakamukha', the 'pataka', the 'suchi,' etc., occurring often. The entry of Salva, Ravana etc., and the dumb 'Abhinaya' in those instances remind us of Kathakali and give us a glimpse into an earlier stage of the Yaksha Gana when it was rich in 'Abhinaya.' If there is no speech, 'Abhinaya' will be complete as in the mute Kathakali, but the introduction of speech brought in a steady loss of 'Abhinaya.' In an older stage, the actors must have done 'Abhinaya' while the songs were being sung by the Chorist.

VII

Though the dance with gesture ('Nritya' or 'Abhinaya') is not extensively present in Yaksha Gana today, the drama is remarkable for its pure dance of 'Nritta.' This 'Nritta,' though not as elaborate and varied as the 'Tirmanas' and 'Adavujatis' in the Nauteh, is yet of a very attractive variety. Yaksha Gana is full of this dance, and is worth study at least for this. Next to the make-up, the best part of the Yaksha Gana is this 'Nritta.' All actors are expected to dance, first within the curtain before they enter, then while entering, and thirdly while the song is sung. The dance within the curtain temporarily held by two persons, is very elaborate especially in the case of the entry of the anti-hero, Ravana and others. Even very old characters, as for instance, the old Brahmin appearing in the 'Bhishma-vijaya,' have to swing their bodies to the rhythm of the songs. All actors have 'Gajjai' or small bells on their feet for this purpose. Their hands turn and give graceful curves. When the mood

is heightened or an actor enters in anger, or one is about to fight, the dance is very vigorous. Wonderful agility of the body is exhibited in these dances which contain many jumps. In some of them could be frequently seen reverses of the leg-poses of the 'Karanas' of Bharata called 'Dandaka Rechita,' 'Krantaka' and 'Dolapada' as preserved in the Chidambaram sculptures. The dances do not interrupt the emotion but only serve to set off the performance. Sometimes two or three characters on the stage do it together in fine harmony. This 'Nritta' is done in three stages : When a song is sung, the dance first proceeds in a slow measure ; then the 'tala' is quickened and we have quick and speedy dance ; and lastly there is very fast and vigorous dance to the accompaniment of pure 'tala' and often to the accompaniment of the drum called 'Chendai' only. Great dexterity is exhibited on the 'Chendai' drum which almost all actors know how to play on.

The fights on the stage are done in exactly the same idealistic manner as envisaged by Bharata's system of an idealistic stage ('Natya Dharmi'). The two characters engaged in fight first exchange hot words, then decide to settle the issue and there is at once the beginning of the fight which is done by a kind of dance in which the two cross each other performing 'Mandala,' 'Gomutrika' and other pugilistic movements. The dance ends with a fight with the bow, in which the actors 'act' the shooting of arrows by producing a sound on their bow-sticks. In the 'Draupadi-pratapa' is to be seen a hand to-hand fight and it is in these places of the idealised fight-actions and fight-dances of the Yaksha Gana that one must try to realise the 'Nyaya,' the 'Sattvati' and 'Arabhati' *Vrittis* of Bharata seen otherwise only in a textbook. One who wants to reconstruct old 'Tandava,' its hundred and eight 'Karanas' and thirty-two 'Angaharas,' can derive much help by a minute observation of these dances in fighting in the Yaksha Gana and the Kathakali and from the 'Nritta' of the Nautch. The fighting scenes of the Kathakali and the Yaksha Gana deserve special attention, for in Chap. IV. Bharata says, before describing the 'Karanas,'

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that they are to be used in 'Nritta' (as we have in the Nautch) and in scenes of fight, that is, the idealised fight-movements on the stage. (*Natya Sastra*, IV: 55). In the 'Rukmangada' a very wonderful dance is done by one of the kings fighting with the prince; he throws himself on both his knees and in unimaginable speed whirls round in circles.

There is yet another kind of dance introduced into the Yaksha Gana. In the 'Rukmangada' there is a scene where a Gandharva comes to a tank for water-sport with two damsels. Before they bathe, the three along with a clown play for some time and here we see a display of the folk-dance called 'Kol Attam,' called 'Samya' in Sanskrit, in which persons dance with small sticks in their hands which they beat to accompany the rhythm of their feet. This dance was done first in a circle and then in pairs.

VIII

The play has an accompanying songster ('Bhagavatar') who sings keeping time with a 'Jalara' ('Kuzhittalam.') There is one 'Sruti' instrument or drone, one 'Mridangam' player, and one big drum called 'Chendai' which is beat during scenes of exchanges of angry words, fights, hurried entrance and the travel of characters through long distances. Sometimes the 'Kuzhittala' is displaced by the gong beat by a small thick stick ('Sikhandi.') It is said that in village performances the good songster is the chief attraction, and the other important aspect of the orchestra behind the Yaksha Gana is the very difficult playing on the 'Chendai' drum of which many actors are masters. The musicians stand at the back as in Kathakali and Nautch. Though the drama is called Yaksha Gana and though it is said that it is characterised by a type of music so called, other varieties of 'Kirthana' type have crept in in subsequent times. The musical theme is in song and verse. These are sung by the musician and the actors' speeches explain elaborately the contents of the song. That is, the substance of the speech is already given in the song. Sometimes, a line sung explains

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the action, saying who enters and what the actor does. Sometimes, the actors who are not generally expected to sing, sing stray snatches of the song along with the musician.

IX

As observed previously, the Yaksha Gana differs from Kathakali in its substitution of speech for dumb 'Abhinaya.' It has also been noticed that the substance of the speeches is already sung in a succinct manner in the song by the musician and that the actors then deliver the speeches. The diction of the Yaksha Gana speech is exalted, strewn as it is copiously with good Sanskrit idioms and occasionally ornamented by gem-like Sanskrit quotations. A high moral tone is set; fine truths and classic philosophic ideas make the Yaksha Gana a true form of liberal education, bringing to all the illiterate the essence of the wisdom of the Rishis. The opening scene of 'Rukmangada' is a disquisition on devotion and spirituality given by the king and on the duties of a virtuous monarch given by his minister. Philosophy and ethics are not the only subjects expounded; worldly wisdom of a varied nature is as effectively inculcated. The 'Draupadi-pratapa' closes with a grand sum-up by Lord Siva himself of the mysteries of man's action, agency, and ego, of how it is God who is the real Worker, and how self-important man is but a tool in His hands. In this respect, next to the heroic ('Veera') it is the spiritual Rasa ('Santa') that predominates the Yaksha Gana. The 'Atikayavadha' is an example of a war-theme converted into a spiritual play.

X .

Among the players in the Sri Perudur Company, almost all are good in dancing. But, Mr. Ganapati Prabhu (Fig. 1) who plays the title roles in all the performances is the best among them. He is a fine dancer and I am told that this veteran is the best in all South Canara. When he plays the sublime hero types like Rukmangada, his movements are very graceful; his tilts of the neck, the 'Griva Rechakas,' and the

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movements of the chest and the hands are very fine and he depicts the emotions wonderfully in his eyes. I marked his effective facial expression in many places and he easily impresses his superior art upon us. Next to him, comes Kittappa who plays Krishna in 'Bhishma-vijaya' and minister and crown prince in 'Rukmangada.' The 'Raudra' *rasa*'s greatest exponent is Kushtappa (Figs 4 and 5). His appearance is always to be eagerly expected showing as it does the largest amount of dumb 'Abhinaya.' When he enters, he inspires awe not only with his dress but also with his long-drawn eerie roar, heard as if from a distance, and with his right hand lifted up in quivering accompaniment to the eerie sounds of his throat. Among the youngsters, Ramakrishna Prabhu does the most vigorous dance next to Kittappa; and Annayya and others are all adepts in dance, wild as well as delicate. Among those who played female roles, Seenappa deserves mention as one suited well to the parts of masculine woman and the forceful type of the 'Praudha' and 'Uddhata Nayika.' These artistes' devotion to their art is admirable, though the remuneration they get out of this art is almost nothing compared to what they can easily earn by abandoning their traditional art for the money-making walks of modern life. Their ardent love for their art must be an example to all modern artistes. The elaborate make-up which takes a long time to go through does not tire them; the neglect of a modernised society does not dishearten them.

The Yaksha Gana is certainly of interest and value not only to the theoretical researcher trying to understand the various forms of indigenous Indian dance and drama but also to the practical reconstructor who is trying to rebuild out of the many survivals the glory that was 'Bharata Natya.' Dramatic renaissance in India today will not be truly Indian if it is only going to create an imitation in India of European theatre; an organic and truly Indian theatre has to be raised, and in this task, the theoretical Sanskrit literature on 'Natya,' dance and drama, the example of Sanskrit dramatists like Kalidasa and Sudraka, and the many vernacular survivals in

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the various provinces in the shape of dances and dance-dramas, have got to play a great part. Drama, says Bharata (*Natyasastra*, XXIV, 71—72), is of two kinds, natural or realistic and ideal or imaginative. All modern and western drama is of the former type ; all ancient Sanskrit drama and other provincial varieties of old Indian drama belong to the latter class. The latter is not to be brushed aside by stale catch-words of criticism—conventional, musical, operatic *etc.* Indian drama is a presentation of a fine unification of 'Bhava,' 'Raga,' and 'Tala,' of an emotional theme conveyed with all the aids of music and rhythm and of action or 'Abhinaya' set like blossoms on the swings and curves of the music and dance. It must be preserved from modern contamination and slander.





ALL ALONE

TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Editor : K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO

'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the elect. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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. . . he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !

—The Song Celestial

‘The Triple Stream’¹

DIVIDED ALLEGIANCE

In the Art Gallery of the Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore, there is a famous water-colour, ‘Mad after the *Veena*,’ by Mr. K. Venkatappa. It represents the artist himself, as being torn between his loyalty to music and to painting. At one stage, his madness for the *Veena* is so great that, in sheer despair, he veils the bust of his great teacher in painting, Dr. Abanindranath Tagore. The curse of divided allegiance was never more strikingly portrayed. For fourteen months, the Editor tried to shut out the *Triveni* from his vision and to devote his attention to the Jatheeya Kalasala, which was dear beyond words. It was difficult to adjust the rival claims of education and journalism. At times, the *Triveni* tore off the veil, and flashed forth anger from her ruby-red eyes. In trying to serve two institutions, each of which required utter consecration, the Editor caused harm and loss to both. Towards the middle of January last, the call of the *Triveni* became insistent, and with considerable pain he resigned the Principalship. Thus it happens that these Notes are being written from the ‘*Triveni*’ Office in Madras, and not within sight of the spacious lawns of the Kalasala, carpetted emerald green and filled with ‘the peace which passeth understanding.’

‘WHERE FLOWERS DO NOT FADE’

During that brief tenure of office he was privileged to take part in a function which marked the commencement of a new epoch in Telugu literature. The Poets Lakshmikantam and Venkateswara Rao dedicated their first long poem to their Guru, Venkata Kavi, the forerunner of the literary renaissance in Andhra. Seven hundred years ago, the poet Ketana

¹ 20th February, 1985

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offered homage to Tikkana, the poet of the Telugu 'Maha-bharata,' by the dedication of the 'Dasakumara Charitra.' Amidst scenes of truly Oriental charm, with music and the lighting of camphor, the authors of 'Soundara-Nandam' laid their precious offering at the feet of the poet of the 'Buddha-Charitra.'

Nanda, a brother of the Lord Buddha, joins the Buddhist Sangha as a 'Bhikku' under circumstances of intense pathos. Nanda and his wife Sundari are perfect aesthetes living in a world of dreams, 'of eternal spring, where leaves do not fall and the flowers do not fade.' The Lord points the way to a higher love which comprehends the entire universe, and is not rendered painful by the fear of separation. In a style which recalls the chiselled grace and sweetness of the 'Prabhavāti Pradyumnam' of Surana, and the 'Vijaya Vilasam' of Venkana, Lakshmikantam and Venkateswara Rao have created this modern classic, achieving perfect poise between thought and language, form and content. To one like the present writer who has day after day, and month after month, listened to the ineffably melodious chanting of the verses by Venkateswara Rao, the 'Soundara Nandam' represents the high-water mark of Telugu poetry in the present century. Among the poets of the Renaissance certain figures stand out prominently: Krishna Sastri, author of 'Krishna Paksham' and 'Urvasi'; Viswanatha Satyanarayana with his 'Nartana-sala' and 'Andhra Prasasti'; and the poets of the 'Soundara Nandam' which is the fulfilment of the rich promise held out years ago in their 'Tholakari.'

INDIAN ART IN LONDON

We invite the attention of our readers to the valuable Note on 'Indian Art in London.' Mr. Oswald Couldrey, formerly Principal of the Rajahmundry College, nursed the artistic genius of the late lamented Damerla Rama Rao, and inspired students like Adivi Bapiraju with a love of Indian Art. He is justifiably annoyed with the Regional Committee for Madras for failing to secure a larger and more representative

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collection of pictures from South India. Some works of Ananda Mohan Sastri, Ram Mohan Sastri, and Kesava Rao—all among those that 'blossomed at Masulipatam'—were exhibited, but most of these found their way into the Exhibition rooms without the aid of the local committee. Though, for some years, the Oriental Art section of the Kalasala has been in abeyance, the Art Gallery of water-colours by former teachers and students remains; and some of these could have been loaned, as well as others from the Rama Rao Art Gallery at Rajahmundry. Individual artists scattered all over South India ought to organise themselves and make such studied neglect impossible in future. Art is not the preserve of an officialised clique, and the expanding art-consciousness in South India should not get stifled for want of adequate opportunity for self-expression.

INDIA SAYS 'NO'

It is a progressive decline from Independence to the substance thereof, then to Dominion Status with safeguards, and finally to Diarchy at the centre and veiled autocracy in the provinces. Was it for this that generations of Indian publicists, from Dadabhai Naoroji to Rangaswami Iyengar, gave their precious lives? The National Congress has 'rejected' the J. P. C. Report and the Bill based on it. The Assembly has, in effect, confirmed the decision of the Congress. Every-day the view is gathering strength that the dropping of the Bill at this stage will not adversely affect the political destinies of India: that India need not submit to the fetters forged for her in the shape of unending reservations in favour of the agents of British Imperialism, and a corresponding denial of power to the advocates of Indian nationalism. Wise statesmanship could have reconciled these conflicting claims, but the divisions in our own camp have robbed us of the strength to make an effective demand for the reality of power. Whether 'rejection' implies abstention from the new legislatures, and refusal to accept office as Ministers, is yet in doubt. But there is no vital contradiction

in rejecting the Reforms and yet accepting office under them. If a continuous fight has to be kept up on all fronts, it is perfectly open to the Congress and other progressive groups to seize the limited power that is so grudgingly conceded, and retain the right to press for the powers withheld. After all, these terms 'rejection' and 'acceptance under protest' merely indicate the temper of different sets of politicians, and may not correspond to differences in the actual course of action pursued by them. If, as seems likely, Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Rajendra Prasad are able to arrive at an amicable settlement of the communal problem on the basis of joint electorates, the first great step forward will have been taken on the road to freedom. Then it will be time enough for an All-Parties Conference, and a Constituent Assembly entitled to speak on behalf of the entire nation and to demand a treaty between England and India, in place of this dole of Reforms which withholds infinitely more than it concedes.

THE 'TWENTIETH CENTURY'

When Mr. Iswara Dutt published his brilliant sketches of South Indian worthies—*Sparks and Fumes*—the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri complimented the young writer by saying that, after reading the book, he had become 'hopeful of the literary future of India.' Today the sight of the first few numbers of the *Twentieth Century* makes us hopeful about the future of Indian journalism. Starting as a freelance, and serving on daily newspapers like *Swarajya*, *The Hindu* and *The Leader*, Mr. Dutt has at long last found his true vocation in journalism of a more enduring type. Choice in its get-up, varied and brilliant in its literary fare, and pervaded by an atmosphere of cultured leisure, the *Twentieth Century* is not only an ornament to Indian journalism, but also its loftiest expression. Its roll of contributors is perhaps the most distinguished in India. The *Twentieth Century* is, in addition, influentially supported and run on excellent business lines. Mr. Dutt is an old and valued friend of the

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Editor of *Triveni*, and between them is the bond of common endeavour which neither time nor circumstance can ever weaken. *Triveni* welcomes this baby-brother, born so near the real 'Triveni' of Allahabad. And is it not the most wonderful baby that ever was, or can be?

THE 'TYAGARAJA' PORTRAIT

Mr. V. Raghavan sends us the following Note on the correct identification of the Tanjore picture published in *Triveni* during 1932:

As Frontispiece to the 1932 July-Aug. number of the *Triveni* (Vol. V. No. 1) appeared a portrait identified as that of Tyagaraja, the immortal South Indian musician-composer. The owner of the portrait, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, wrote in a Note on that portrait that he was informed by the person from whom he got it that it was a portrait of the Tanjore school, and that the name of the personality as Tyagaraja 'was suggested later, *though tentatively*.' In Madras, music enthusiasts ardently received this as a new portrait of the immortal musician and it got circulated as a contemporary portrait of Tyagaraja. In the Nov.-Dec. issue of the same Journal for the same year (Vol. V. No. 3), the portrait was discussed and its identification as Tyagaraja was doubted. It was put forward by a writer (p. 281) that the subject was a typical Lingayat Saivaite Bhagavatar and that the portrait was not of the Tanjore School but it was 'typical of the Mysore School.' This portrait does belong to the Tanjore school and it does not represent any Lingayat Bhagavatar. But it is not Tyagaraja's portrait. It is a portrait of a well-known and much revered contemporary of Tyagaraja, Sri Gopala Bhagavatar of Varahur, a village in the Tanjore Dt.

Gopala Bhagavtar was not a musician as Tyagaraja was. He was a Bhakta and a performer of the traditional 'Bhajana' with singing and dancing, as the *Tambur* on his shoulder and the bells on his feet show. Gopalasvamin or Gopala Bhagavtar was besides a gifted exponent of the 'Bhagavata-purana,' the Veda of the 'Bhakti-marga.' It is now about sixty years since Gopala Bhagavtar passed away. He belonged to the 'Sishya-parampara' of the famous saint-composer, Narayana Tirtha Yati, the author of the 'Krishna Lila Tarangini.' During his life-time, Gopala Bhagavtar heard

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that the Tanjore court had a portrait of their first Guru, Narayana Tirtha ; he went to the court and brought a copy of his guru's portrait ; and along with Narayana Tirtha's second portrait, one of Gopala Bhagavatar also was prepared. Those two original portraits of Narayana Tirtha and Gopala Bhagavatar are now in the 'Puja-griha' of the grandson of Gopala Bhagavatar, Mr. Bharata Sastry, Ayurvedic physician, Triplicane. It was through Mr. Bharata Sastry's brother, Mr. Lakshmana Sastry of the Madras Govt. Oriental MSS Library, that Mr. Vetury Prabhakara Sastry of the same Library published with a Note those two portraits of Narayana Tirtha and Gopala Bhagavatar in the Madras Telugu Monthly *Bharati* in 1925 (part 6, facing p. 16). If one turns to the *Bharati* for 1925 or visits Mr. Bharata Sastry's house in Triplicane, he can see for himself that what was published in the *Triveni* as a portrait of Tyagaraja is really a portrait of Varahur Gopala Bhagavatar.

Gopala Bhagavatar is a well-known name in all places in South India where the traditional 'Bhajana' is still going on. Many 'Bhajana-maths' must have had his portrait and there must have been more than one portrait of his. That published in the *Triveni* is one of those other portraits of Gopala Bhagavatar. The *Triveni* portrait shows the Bhagavatar slightly younger with a recently shaven face, whereas the original in Mr. Bharata Sastry's house which was reproduced in the *Bharati* has an older face with a beard. There is yet another portrait of Gopala Bhagavatar in Mr. Bharata Sastry's possession, in which is painted the same person at a ripe old age, sitting and doing 'Japa' with a red silk rosary in his hand. I am also told by Mr. Bharata Sastry that the Zamindar of Udayarpalayam has in his mansion a big portrait of Gopala Bhagavatar which the Zamindars of that house worship.

We have made the pilgrimage recommended by Mr. Raghavan, and we are convinced that he is right. But the picture published in *Triveni* will always be valued as a rare gem of Indian Art, of the Tanjore School.

The Case for Rejection

By B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

(Member, Working Committee of the Congress)

*'Sow ko sat
Adha gaya not
Thus dethum
Thus dilathum
Thus ki bath
Chodo miya'*

—URDU PROVERB.

So much has been said in the past few months since the White Paper and its corollary, the J. P. C. Report, have been published that it seems almost a superfluous task to attempt a detailed presentation of the case for rejection, at this late hour in the day, to your readers. Yet the task set to the writer must be done. English people, traders and statesmen alike, have not failed to perceive our difficulty in India. They do not waste time in arguing that white is black or black is white, but they baldly and boldly point out that 'all white and no black' makes the reforms a dangerous innovation. But dangerous to whom? is the question that we ask. Dangerous certainly to the interests of the Englishmen in India. But they join issue with us and they say, repeating the age-long cant to which we are accustomed, that India is not a country but a continent and that there are numerous races and religions always at war with one another in this woe-begone land of ours. Here it is really that they and we differ, and differ fundamentally too. Here also is the key to the situation in which the dual meaning of the phrase 'safeguards in Indian interests' was accepted as part of the Gandhi-Irwin pact in 1931 by the high contracting parties. It is a wise saying of Oliver Wendell Holmes that, where two opponents differ on fundamentals, it is fruitless to argue a point further. For, the more

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they argue the farther away they travel from each other. Our contention is that India, even if she were a minor and a ward, has attained man's estate and must assume charge of affairs exclusively. But the English people argue that such transfer is dangerous alike to their interests as well as ours. Accordingly, in every change they propose to make at this moment, they have made a plan for continuing their guardianship for at least another century. If we can establish by a reference to the details of the Report that this is so, then we need not feel any doubt about rejecting the Report or the Bill altogether. What exactly rejection means has also become a contentious point. But we need not lose time in debating it, for, political situations change from day to day and the uncertainties of the future so often talked of in every branch of life are particularly noticeable in the domain of politics.

At Lahore in 1929 we had demanded complete Independence, and when at Karachi we interpreted complete Independence as the 'substance of Independence,' we showed to the world that we were not merely academic in our view, but that we had a lively sense of the real and the practical. What, however, does the 'substance of Independence' mean? Every ryot knows that he enjoys independence on his own farm. That does not mean that he does not depend upon water that flows from a public channel, or that he need not buy seeds and manures from outside, or that he should not engage labour other than that of the members of his family, or that he could be compelled not to borrow short term or long term money for agricultural purposes. All these conditions are equally applicable to the Indian people, when they claim Independence and deserve to enjoy the substance thereof. For a long time to come, commodities may have to be imported from abroad and the services of experts engaged wherever they must be. Yea, money itself may have to be borrowed from those that can spare it, here or elsewhere, for national purposes. But to say that we cannot ask for an account of the moneys borrowed in our name and at our credit by those who claim to be trustees to our estate,¹⁰

THE CASE FOR REJECTION

demand that all our officers and public servants should be answerable to the trustee for a good long time, to claim that England shall have (preferential) rights in respect of trade and commerce in India, is really not to admit us to a position of equality,—let alone Independence—but to write us down once and for ever as subjects if not as serfs. How else can be explained the safeguards and reservations that occur in such abundance throughout the pages of these reports? The great war, it was claimed, was fought for establishing the principle of self-determination for small and weak nationalities. But today we have the spectacle of a great country—not merely a great nationality—which had assisted in winning the war and was called upon as a measure of reward to sign the treaty of Versailles, and was made an original member of the League of Nations as well as an integral member of the Commonwealth of the British Empire, being called upon to accept a constitution which is imposed upon it from outside, and is coupled with trade agreements in the formation of which she really has not had a responsible part at any time. Self-determination is really determination of one's own constitution by oneself. Australia did so determine hers and Ireland has done likewise. Joint determination comes next, which was ostensibly the method sought to be adopted by the members of the Round Table Conferences. That too has gone by the board, for the joint memorandum of the Indian delegation has been quietly consigned to the waste paper basket. There remains the third method, which is neither 'self-determination' nor 'joint determination' but '*other determination*', by which the constitution of a country is settled by people other than its own. India has a right to complain not merely that she has been denied self-determination, but that even joint deliberation, which Lord Irwin and Ramsay MacDonald have visualised in the matter of the Indian constitution, has been deliberately ignored.

Moreover when Gandhi was persuaded to join the second Round Table Conference and the Congress agreed to send him to London, the purpose that was held in view at the

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time was that he should negotiate the fundamentals of a treaty between England and India and not the details of a constitution to be granted by England to India. Even today the position remains unchanged, for the need of the hour is not a constitution hammered out in England for India, but a clear understanding of the fundamentals and the conditions on which the constitution is erected. If there is unanimity on the former, there will be no difficulty in shaping the latter. So long as the one is not considered, there can be no success relating to the other. It is a different matter whether India has developed the power to demand such a treaty; a treaty must be made in any case, and if she has not the power to demand, she must wait. In either case the time is not opportune for the formulation of a constitution, and a constitution forced on the country would be—could only be—rejected, as it is either too late or too early.

Another attribute of a satisfactory constitution has been aptly described by no less a personality than Lord Irwin, who said that the constitution of a country should be like the bark of a tree capable of expanding with the growth of the trunk, and not like the habiliments of a person which must be changed by the tailor every time he gains or loses in bulk. This is a virtual translation of the statement that Indians must have the power of altering their constitution from time to time. Two instances of such power occur in the Montford Reforms. It was given to the legislative councils of the provinces to admit women to the rights of the franchise and of candidature, with the result that the women of India were admitted to the rights of franchise and of election in one bound, and they scored a victory in this country with such infinite ease as could not be dreamt of by their sisters in England, who had to organise a whole suffragette movement with all its well known stunts of women throwing themselves across the path of race horses in the Derby and suspending themselves by chains from the balconies of the Houses of Parliament in the midst of their sittings. Another automatic facility that was provided in the Montford Reforms was

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that the President of the Assembly and of the councils should be nominated for a period of four years and that thereafter the posts thrown open to election. That has been done, and even the President of the Council of State has become an elected President recently. When we speak of an elastic constitution, we mean that either a provision should be contained in the legislation which might be implemented at a later period, or the constituent powers should be so arranged that the Indian legislature itself should be competent to add to its rights from time to time, at its own risk and peril. The J. P. C. Report does not make provision for either kind of self-adjustment, and this is another reason—and really the supreme reason—for the rejection of any reform based upon such a report.

Now let us traverse the harder ground of positive recommendations from step to step, in the descending or the ascending order, instead of making vague generalisations of an academic character. The Gandhi-Irwin agreement laid down that the future constitution of India should be built upon the three beams of Federation, Central Responsibility and Safeguards in the interests of India, and that the financial commitments of the Government of India should be subject to an investigation by an impartial tribunal representing the British Government and the Indian Congress. Now this solemn agreement had been signed virtually by both parties and therefore is binding equally upon both. Whatever may be said about the renewal of civil disobedience and the lapses on the part of Government in renewing the ordinances, whatever may be said about salt-concessions and their alternate refusal and renewal of them by Government from time to time, there can be no question that this portion of the agreement relating to the beams of the Indian constitution should be considered inviolable. We are, however, told that federation is a remote contingency based upon the accession of the Princes at their own pleasure, to the extent of 50% in the strength or 50% in representation to the Assembly. But in fact it was the Princes themselves that had to bargain for federation on

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condition that it should be based upon the grant of central responsibility. Leave this for a moment and consider whether there is a certainty of federation being introduced at any time, for we are told that there should be a formal petition asking for it and that the two Houses of Parliament should pass resolutions supporting it. We know exactly the position of Parliament and the internecine fights that are going on between the parties that compose it. Whether these fights between the Baldwins and the Churchills are real fights or mock-fights, the fact remains that the introduction of the federation is itself a contingency not only of a remote but also of a doubtful character.

Nor is the hope of federation of any avail unless central responsibility is a fact. The question then is whether we are having any central responsibility. What sort of central responsibility is this with which we are dealing here? Again, we are dealing really with a reproduction of the comic side of the constitution drama. Here again we have our old friend—Diarchy. First the Army, External Affairs, and the Ecclesiastical Department are to be wholly reserved subjects. The rest are supposed to be transferred. If federation is conditioned by central responsibility, central responsibility itself is conditioned by safeguards which, it was admitted, must be in the interests of India. Therefore one should have only expected to have a barbed wire fencing placed behind the hedges that limit your compound from that of your neighbour. Instead we have the whole floor covered with it all over the house. If it were so, you would have no dwelling accommodation whatever. While the transferred subjects constitute our dwelling rooms in the edifice of Swaraj, the safeguards constitute the British thicket and hawthorn scattered all over.

Take any transferred subject,—of course the words ‘reserved’ and ‘transferred’ are scrupulously avoided in the J. P. C. Report lest it should be said that Diarchy is being re-enacted. In the domain of finance, the Finance Minister is to be *assisted*, which is a euphemism for ‘dominated,’ by a

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financial adviser who is the intermediary between the Minister and the Governor-General, and whose advice would really be in the nature of a mandate. The Minister selected would therefore necessarily be of the type of *farman bardars* that we are meeting with today in the provincial governments. Then again there is the Minister of Transport, who is to be controlled by a statutory board which is appointed by the Governor-General in his discretion and created by Parliament and not by the authority of the Indian legislature. It is all well and good to speak of the benefits of British rule being visualised in posts and telegraphs and railways. But railways would not carry, posts would not convey, and telegraphs will not communicate men or messages which are not acceptable to the statutory board. During the civil disobedience movement we had experienced these three contingencies. The statutory board would really mountguard not only over the finance but also over the politics of the transferred departments. There remains the Commerce Minister jammed in between a cannon to the right and a cannon to the left and a cannon to the front, volleying and thundering. He cannot accept a tariff measure lest it should injure the interests of the United Kingdom. He *should* hear any representation from England upon any preferential duty, and should not levy a tax upon imported goods which might lower the price of indigenous goods below those of the United Kingdom. No measure such as the coastal shipping measure of Haji can be permitted to be introduced into the central legislature unless the Governor-General has given his prior consent. It is open to any citizen to challenge the validity of any legislative measure before the highest courts of India, and it is laid down that no restrictive regulations relating to capital or directorate on foreign companies in India should be applicable to the British companies in India, past, present, or future. The more we examine the chapter dealing with the commercial safeguards, the more we feel that our future is absolutely at the mercy of British traders. The commercial magnates of the United King-

dom have a free hand in exploring and exploiting the wealth of India, and they are entitled to subsidies and bounties, despite their abundant wealth and experience, in equal measure with the struggling Indian companies, and finally reciprocity is talked of. What kind of reciprocity is it? It seems that if any disabilities are imposed upon Indian traders in the United Kingdom from which British traders, whether companies or individuals, are exempt in India, the exemption enjoyed by the latter would, *pro tanto*, cease to have effect. It is unnecessary to labour the point further. These are not safeguards but deductions from powers that are supposed to be transferred. In fact they are not transferred but reserved, and it would be more honest to say that commerce also is to rank as a reserved subject along with the three already described. We do not have under the new Reforms even the fiscal autonomy which we have been enjoying hitherto.. While upto now Government have been undoing some of the fiscal measures passed by the legislature, chiefly those relating to textiles, by counter-moves on the part of the executive, hereafter they will be under no such restraints.

On the top of these we have the Governor-General with the Reserve Bank on one side and the Services on the other, absolutely immune from all popular influences, let alone *control* by popular power. The Governor-General is first a dual personality, and with the words 'in his discretion' following his title he becomes the mouthpiece of His Master's Voice in England. The Report throughout is dotted with this expression which indicates the spikeheads with which the constitution is studded. This is not all. The Bill now before Parliament has introduced a new phrase—'the Governor-General in his judgment.' How the 'discretion' differs from the 'judgment' we know not, nor are the two differently controlled by the Secretary of State, for it is distinctly laid down that both in regard to the exercise of his 'discretion' or his 'judgment' he is subject to the general control as well as the particular instructions of the Secretary of State. But even more surprising and stunning is the provision that the

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Governor-General need not act within the four corners of the Statute or the Instrument of Instructions. Says Section 13—(2): ‘The validity of anything done by the Governor-General shall not be called in question on the ground that it was done otherwise than in accordance with the Instrument of Instructions.’ Then again, the Governor-General’s ordinances remain as ever before. He can of course veto bills passed by the legislature and can vote supplies rejected by it. The Services owe their allegiance to his authority, as they owe their position and preferment to his patronage. It is all very well to speak of Crown conventions and parliamentary precedents, but they become a mockery in India and an insult to the Indian nation when all the attributes of real self-government, of which they are the natural traits, are nowhere. In England His Majesty the King may have these and a thousand other prerogatives, but they are there in name and not in reality. We have seen how the vetoing powers of provincial Governors have been in the past pressed into service in the very first year of the Montford Reforms, when in Madras the Russelkonda Saw Mills were saved by the bureaucracy from the wrath of the legislature. Crown conventions are only conventions when the Crown itself is the social head of a democracy as in England. But they become inescapable invasions of popular rights when the Crown exercises a personal and absolute rule as in India.

We have spoken of the Governor-General being buttressed by the Services on the one side and the Reserve Bank on the other. It is laid down that the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police Service must continue to be recruited in England as heretofore and their privileges and prerogatives should be continued unimpaired. What are these privileges and prerogatives? The Ministers have no hand in transferring or posting any member of the Imperial Services, and instead the Governor-General and the Governors are the sole authorities in this behalf. The emoluments of the All India Services cannot be interfered with in any way, and for as long as they serve they *must* continue to enjoy privileges of pay and pension and

promotion as if no change had taken place in the Indian Constitution. An examination of the existing privileges, the continuance of which is guaranteed to the All India and Provincial Services (as set forth in the appendix to the White Paper which is practically applicable to the J. P. C. Report), would reveal how the All India Services have been made the real masters in the country and how the Ministers are utterly powerless to deal with them in any manner whatever. Indeed their salaries, pensions, and payments on appeal are made wholly non-votable, and it is not possible even to keep vacant any All India post for more than three months. Nor can we add to the cadre any post which may adversely affect any officer, nor can we even appoint a specialist if it is thought that such an appointment will affect the interests of the All India Services prejudicially.

We have dealt with the safeguards at length because they abridge the so-called central responsibility upon which the wheel of federation revolves. We may wind up the story with a recital of what Sir John Simon and his Committee had recommended regarding the Army. The Army in India, they said, should be divided into an Imperial section maintained by England and an Indian section which is a charge on India. But all this has gone; not that it is large in itself, but that even the little contemplated by Sir John has vanished. Such is the central responsibility that has been constituted in the J.P.C. Report, and upon these boggy foundations of clay and slush and mud, is to be built at a future date the edifice of federation, with the brick and stone of the Princes and the mortar cement of the People of India. One wonders how these can be cemented. Let us study the aspects of the constitutional architecture for a moment.

The Governor-General is in the first place supported by the authority created by the phrase, 'In his own discretion.' Then a Reserve Bank is carved out for him which is to be at his beck and call; and whereas hitherto the legislature has had something to do with the discussions relating to currency and exchange problems, now both these are taken away from the

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purview of the popular Assembly, and made the exclusive concern of the Reserve Bank manned by the Government's men. The Reserve Bank's directorate is to be composed of sixteen Directors of whom only eight are to be elected, while out of the remaining eight, four are to be officials and four nominated non-officials. Thus a half of the directorate is to be nominated. Here again it will be argued that the procedure adopted is only in conformity with the procedure in vogue in all civilised countries. It may be so. But is not the constitution and are not the powers of the Reserve Bank unlike those obtaining in *such self-governing countries.*? Here the Reserve Bank will virtually be influenced and managed by the European exchange banks in India, and the Governor-General himself has the sole power to appoint four of its Directors. The shareholders with five shares have the right of voting. The White Paper at least had laid down that the constituent powers would authorise the Indian legislature to alter the structure of the Reserve Bank. But the J.P.C. Report has laid it down that neither the structure nor the functions of the Bank can be altered by the Indian legislature. In the aggregate then you have an Army that is at the bidding of the Governor-General, and a Reserve Bank that answers the call of the European financial interests, as the rural credit section has all but vanished except in name. We need not spend much time upon discussing the position and the powers of the central legislature when central responsibility itself has really been resolved into Diarchy answerable to the Secretary of State. The question of the voting strength of the popular power of the legislature need not bother us at all. It may be presumed that they are so designed as to subserve the interests of the reserved departments; and when the Army, consuming nearly a third of the central revenue, is reserved the Governor-General must necessarily have an official bloc, maybe under a different name, to answer his purposes. The old nominated bloc is replaced by the Princes bloc today, and the old dodge of playing one group against another is made possible by the device of indirect election which is introduced

into the central legislature,—the several groups of representatives always acting one against another and all acting upto the behests of the Governor-General. We shall not weary the readers with the detailed discussion of the numbers with which the legislatures are constituted. The extension of franchise has thus been neutralised by the method of indirect election and the Princes' bloc. Thus is India saved for the British bureaucracy and for British commerce for at least a century to come. And when we find that the Reforms will cost India a huge sum of between ten and twenty crores of rupees, we can only exclaim: 'The game is not worth the candle!'

There is a complaint regarding the absence of reference to 'Dominion Status.' No sensible draftsman would associate such arbitrary powers of the Governor-General with Dominion Status, in being or in action. What should be really regretted in this behalf is not that there is no reference in the Bill to Dominion Status, but that those powers which India virtually enjoyed as a 'Dominion' have been expressly taken away by specific provisions in the Bill. Let us refer to some in passing. Hitherto, it was a moot question whether the legislature can summon a member like Sarat Chandra Bose before the bar of the House: now the power is specifically taken away. Hitherto, a Sarat Chandra Bose could contest a seat from behind the bars of the prison: hereafter anyone undergoing a sentence cannot even be a candidate. Take the shipping rights. When Haji's Bill was introduced, the matter was referred to the Law officers of the Crown by Government as to whether such a measure could be introduced, and they opined in favour of Haji, following the analogy of the Dominions. Now the power is altogether taken away. Thirdly, let us take currency. It is the undoubted and undisputed right of every country to fix the monetary value of its own currency. But in India the legislature is deprived of such powers. Fourthly, the right of imposing restrictions on the formation of foreign companies is another such indefeasible right which has been taken away by the Bill, and which is referred to at

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length elsewhere. Then there is the question of railway rates; railways are a transferred subject under a Minister, but railway rates cannot be altered or determined by the legislature. Fifthly, the disqualifications arising from election offences of a candidate for the legislature, as hitherto in existence, may be abated by order of the Governor-General, but this existing power is taken away in the new Bill. In effect then, these safeguards are really deprivations of powers,—not kept in reserve to be exercised by the Governor-General as against Ministers, but powers of which the Governor-General is himself deprived. In the domain of the judicial administration, the existing powers of the High Courts are altogether retrenched. Section 107 of the Government of India Act invests the High Courts with *general powers of supervision* over all the subordinate tribunals, including the Special Tribunals and Criminal Law Amendment Act Courts. The words 'powers of supervision' are altered into 'powers of administrative supervision,' so that the judicial powers are converted into merely administrative powers. Again the High Courts have now an effective voice in the appointment of District Judges, though in reality it is the Government that makes them. This is taken away from the High Courts. The Chief Justiceship is thrown open to Civilian Judges. Finally, there is a clause which says that no reserved subject can be transferred in relation to the Federal States unless the State concerned gives its consent.

An impartial study of the Statutory Report would not be complete without a word being said regarding the provinces. Here the Governors are levelled up to the position of the Governor-General for purposes of ordinance-making, side by side with the transfer of all provincial subjects to popular Ministers. Of course there are deductions at the bottom—deductions from the transfer; and there are concessions at the top—concessions to autocracy. Hereafter the Governors will have equal authority with the Governor-General, directly enacting ordinances; and the Governors' powers of appointing Ministers are to be regulated, not by those uplifting

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traditions associated with parliamentary government and cabinet formations, but in accordance with the policy of forming groups in place of parties and recognising communities in place of policies. A subtle suggestion is made in the J. P. C. Report that the Governors do select the Ministers not from the majority party, but from groups; and it will not be possible when Ministers are so selected to table a motion of censure on them, for each group would be anxious to keep its own man in office, and will be told that by the motion that particular group is sought to be penalised. This means the end of all corporate responsibility among the Ministers. In addition to this, the Governor is supported by a super-secretary who plays the part of a mentor or monitor to the class of Ministers, having free access to their deliberations, conveying them all faithfully to his master, the Governor. The Ministers are thus paralysed, for, on the slightest hint of the Ministers leaning towards the popular will, the Governor can bring his steam hammer of veto and crush the legislature in one thud. This however is a potential power, but it is directly put down that Police rules are to be excluded from the purview of the Minister concerned, and so is the C. I. D. The Inspector-General of Police is made the super-minister for Law and Order actually, and if we may lift the veil from the mystery of this arrangement, we shall see in all its nakedness the Diarchy of old, so far as Law and Order is concerned. Mr. Montagu started the idea of framing an Instrument of Instructions, but it was to be a departmental affair with no statutory authority behind it. The J. P. C. Report has made an improvement upon the Montford Report and made the Instrument of Instructions statutory. It will require the action of Parliament to abate the authority of this Instrument by a jot or tittle, and this constitution has been declared by Sir Samuel Hoare as intended to serve India for a generation. We may take it that it is meant to serve India for a century. The more we study the Report, the more we are compelled to admire the ingenuity of the British statesmen. It is said that the Ori-

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tals are a subtle people, but none can beat these English merchants in the science and art of bargaining. It is difficult to write with patience upon a report such as this. It is a direct affront to a whole nation which has its birthrights. There are those who say that half a loaf is better than no bread, but what are we to say to those who place in your hands a stone in place of a slice of bread! No amount of mastication and insalivation can sweeten this petrified stuff, and everyone in India knows that it has to be rejected without reservations of any character. It is our right to get the sixteen annas in the rupee or our hundred per cent. But as the debtor in the Urdu proverb quoted at the beginning says, the Englishman also says that, out of the hundred, only sixty is payable, and of this, half is gone by rebate. 'Out of the balance of thirty, I pay you ten and shall cause another ten to be paid; and as for the remaining ten—what of it, give it up, master!'

The Last Act

Nothing matters any more :
On the tired face of pain
I have bravely shut the door,
I who cannot love again.
Have my hopes been all denied ?
Are my dreams unsatisfied ?
Have I then for years and years
Loved and longed for you in vain ?

Like a tomb I lie apart,—
It is truly very strange
How this restless human heart
Could have undergone this change.
Nothing makes me restless now :
On my calm unruffled brow
You can touch tranquillity
Of a highborn mountain range.

Nothing matters more to me
Who am dead to joy and grief ;
Like an uncomplaining tree
Widowed utterly of leaf,
Beggared of all bloom, I stand
Empty heart and empty hand. . . .
Winter-whiteness creeps across
Me whose Spring was very brief.

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

Written at Vikarabad,
25th Sept. 1931

Masumatti

(*A Story*)

By MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR

(Translated from Kannada by Navaratna Rama Rao)

[My grandfather was Mr. Courtenay's Judicial clerk—or 'Jodi shawl Sheristedar,' as we call that official, substituting words we know for unfamiliar ones. Quite recently, while rummaging among old *dastars* in my house to sort out useless papers for destruction, I happened upon a file of documents relating to my grandfather's days, and found among them part of a diary kept by Mr. Courtenay. I had seen Mr. Courtenay, and have dim recollections of a gift or two of sweetmeats from him. He was a good and kindly man. I opened his diary at random, and glanced over a few pages. What I saw there made me read the whole of it. I did so forthwith, for it was short and I could finish it at a sitting. It interested me, and I give it in the hope it may interest you.]

There is a beautiful story current among Hindus. After slaying Ravana, Sri Rama, it is said, meant to go to Lanka to place Vibhishana on the throne, but at the gate of the conquered city he saw a lovely sapphire, which awakened in him such strong desire that his mind misgave him as to the temptations that awaited within. This made him forbear to enter, and send Lakshmana instead, to attend to the business of installation.

This country is as Lanka to us—but, alas! we are not as Rama. It is as though the call, 'Give up all and follow me', has been really the lure of wealth, for, from the very outset, our intercourse with this country has led to the gradual transfer of its substance to us. We never see a beautiful object here, but we wish to take it home.

This is what set me thinking of this. My sister Emily and her husband have come on a visit and are spending a few

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days with me. John Farquhar loves this land—I know none other of our people who loves it so well. He knows the people, their speech, and their ways. He knows all that is best in this hoary civilisation ; he understands and loves the sculptured perfection of these temples. To name him is to recall his services in interpreting this country to ours,—in giving to our people an idea of the beauty of this age-long culture, and the wonderful way in which it endures and permeates the everyday lives of this people. He has visited all places where there is anything to see,—ancient temples and monasteries, remains of palaces and royal dynasties ; and everywhere he has sought and seen old pictures, antique statues, ancient works of art. His heart has gone out to all he saw, and whoso reads his glowing pages must understand and appreciate, even as he did. The people of India must feel grateful to him ; and in all he has done, Emily has been with him and has learnt to love this country.

Farquhar has got together a fairly large number of pictures and statues from wherever he could beg or buy them, and it is his hope to form a museum of his own when his collection is complete. On their way to me, they visited the Ajanta caves, and Farquhar could talk of nothing else ; but Emily was so silent that I asked her why. She was quite delighted, she said ; yet there was a thing that made her sad. What thing ? I asked.

'Oh, hardly a *thing*,' she said, 'a mere thought, perhaps no more than a fancy. I said to myself—these excellent men who painted—couldn't they have painted on paper or canvas? For so, we could have bought the pictures, at whatever price, and called them ours, and taken them home. Whatever made them paint on rocks to awaken but mock our wishes?'

I smiled, for what Emily said seemed quite natural and proper, coming as it did from a laudable enthusiasm for Indian art. To desire the beautiful is, I suppose, human nature.

The talk came round to the temples and places of historical interest in my division.

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'I have heard there's a place called Masumatti in your division,' said Farquhar, 'and I am told there's a man there that has some splendid old pictures. (He proceeded to give the man's name and other details.) I should like to get a picture or two from him if I can. Do you think you can help me?'

I consented, for I was only too glad to help in anything which could make the world see the true greatness of this country. And so we went to Masumatti yesterday.

Masumatti is now a mere hamlet—it has decayed as far as the village can decay without becoming *bechirakh* (lightless), the word by which these people denote the night desolation of an uninhabited village. Besides the few straggling houses in the outskirts, there are but four or five in the village itself. The inhabitants are all cultivators. When I had gone there a few days earlier, I had met an old man sunning himself on the verandah of his house. I asked him why the village had come to this pass. I don't know how it happens—but these people, even the humblest, have a grasp of basic truths, and there is philosophy in their ordinary talk. Their peasants have the manners of princes, and there is a deep inward peace in their everyday lives. Well, when I asked the old man why his village was decayed,

'All towns have to decay,' he answered.

'But,' said I, 'there are some that grow?'

'They grow in growing time, and that over, they decay.'

'Had your town ever a growing time?' I asked. It was a foolish question, but I wanted to get the old man to talk of his village. He smiled as he made answer:

'Can age come unless youth have gone before?'

And then he went on to say that this crumbling village had been the far-famed *Mahishmati-nagara* of the Puranas where Kartavirya Arjuna had once reigned in his glory, and where hundreds of royal houses had succeeded him and flourished and fallen in their turn; till finally it had been overwhelmed fighting against Mussalman invaders and dwindled into a hamlet. It had continued on its downward way till,

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as I could see, there were but four houses left. It seemed strange to identify this all but *bechirakh* village with the Mahishmati of ancient story, but the old man had no doubt whatever on the subject. He showed me a stone *mantap* where Arjuna of the thousand arms had been wont to take his exercise. He showed me likewise the pond where the hero used to perform his daily ablutions, and the temple where he rendered daily worship. He told me of a *mantap* where Ravana had been held prisoner, and made to dance for the amusement of the Mahishmati people, as a great glittering ten-headed monster. The captive had at first refused to perform, but Arjuna had struck him so, that he started up in rage and pain striking ten dents, with his ten heads, into the stone ceiling of the prison. The dents—the old man said—could be seen to this day. That is the way with these people. No village is too small or insignificant to be worthy of association with gods and heroes, and the days are not past when divine beings trod the earth. This old man was only talking as is usual with him and his sort; but, no doubt, this village had been a mighty town in its day. Look at the *mantap*, for instance, which had been the many-armed hero's gymnasium, and at the multi-pillared prison of the Rakshasa. They were low-roofed to be sure; but what immense stones, what solidity and cleanliness of build! This surely was the work of no feeble men. The pond, which had been Arjuna's bathing place, was a hundred and fifty yards square, with broad steps of dressed stone, so well planed and so truly jointed that the thousands of years which had desolated countries and destroyed dynasties had wrought hardly a change in the structure. This was without a doubt the work of builders who had gloried in their skill, and known the joy of creating beautiful structures. There is yet a little water in that pond, and it laps the foot of the same tier of steps all round, so justly have they been built, and so little has time touched them. And then that temple. To eyes accustomed to the exquisite lines of Greek art, and the massive majesty of our own architecture, there is at first a disappointing sense of some-

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thing crude and inconsequential in Indian building and sculpture; but take a temple as a whole, and the effect is far from unsatisfying. This temple I am speaking of is of the usual type—carefully built and finished; the slabs and stones fitted with workman-like neatness and precision. It is still in a fair state of preservation. There is an image in the temple, but no worship has taken place for years.

And in the village itself, there are long lines of crumbling foundations of what must have been palatial houses, laid out in streets, in the goodly order of a well-planned town. My old friend pointed out what had been the Brahmana street; another row of ruins had been the jeweller's street, and so on

Now, mere emptiness and silence; even the imagination can hardly people that wilderness of crumbling walls.

When yesterday I made enquiries about the pictures my brother-in-law wished to see, I found that my old friend was the owner of them. We sent for him. He came out, and saluting us with old world courtesy, begged us to enter. This man had a lofty graciousness which seemed to spring from an innate nobility of soul.

'Are you Mr. Krishnayya?' asked Farquhar.

'Yes, sir.'

'I have some business with you: that's why we came.'

'I am at your service.'

'I have heard that you have some beautiful old pictures. I have come to see them if I may.'

'I haven't many, but such as I have you are welcome to see. Pray come in and be seated.'

We took our seats in the *hazara-hall*. The old gentleman went in and brought a few pictures. They were painted with very ordinary colours on indifferent canvas made by laying some waxy paste on cloth. The lines were flowing and graceful. Some pictures looked as though parts had been erased and re-drawn, while others remained as they had come from the inspired mind of the artist. His touch must have been wonderfully light and sure. One of them was a

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picture of Gopalakrishna. A look at it sufficed to tell you how real Gopalakrishna must have been to the artist.

What words can express the beauty of the pose, the daintiness of the fingers which held the flute to the wooing lips, the infinite tenderness of the eyes! The body was gracefully poised on one foot, so that the garland hung a little aslant on the bosom. All this is easy to describe, but who can describe the atmosphere of rapt and silent absorption—as though all sound, all sense, all nature, had been merged and lost in an infinite harmony,—the listening stillness of the trees, the various pose of cow and calf surprised and spell-bound in the act of grazing or gambol, the ecstatic groups of gods and *rishis* and *gopikas*? This man, surely, saw his God as he painted Him! Emily and Farquhar were in raptures.

'Whose work is this?'

'My grandfather's.'

'He had genius!'

'My family has not produced such another.'

'Did he paint other pictures?'

'Oh, he painted a good many; but they were most of them like this one, pictures of Gopalakrishna. He delighted in making pictures of the god. Well, he painted, and painted and this is what remains of it all.'

The old man went in and brought out a *daftari* which we found to contain a number of pictures of the god, differing but little from one another. Some were almost replicas of one another, while others differed only in general effect. There were sixteen of them altogether.

'He made them---and he put each by sadly, as not quite the Vision that had been vouchsafed to him. Then he began another. Finally he had this,—the one you have already seen.'

Farquhar looked up with interest.

'Did he say he was satisfied that this picture expressed his vision?' he asked.

'No. A few days later, he started painting another. I heard that, before he put his hand to it, he was for ten or twelve days wrapped up in worship and meditation. It was a

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strange life, sir, my grandfather's. At the end of that time he started up from meditation crying, "My God is come!" and bade his wife bring cocoanuts, and flowers, and fruit for worship. Then he sat down to paint. The day was far stepped into the afternoon, and he was still at his picture. Later, his elder brother who had finished his daily worship, came and sat silently near him. All the children—and my grandmother who being big with my father was not allowed to remain fasting—had long since finished their meal. My grandfather and his brother were the only people who hadn't dined. It was almost evening, and my grandfather continued working at his picture. Then came a cry that the marauders were upon us. The gates were closed, and the whole town swarmed to the ramparts. My grandfather was a man of great courage. He rose up saying, "Perhaps it is not God's pleasure that this picture should be finished today", and with a lingering look at it, he seized his bow and quiver, and went out. Our women, it seems, begged my grandfather to dine before going out; but he only laughed and said that the meal might wait, but the fight would not, and so went out. His brother also said, "Never mind, he'll be coming back presently", and waited for him. I have heard that my grandfather so far yielded to the importunities of the women as to eat one of the plantains used for worship, and that was all. The raiders were in great force, and we were but few; the wiser part would have been to bribe them to leave us alone, to which they would have been nothing loath, and some there were that counselled this course; but my grandfather was a man of spirit, and with a few men of like heart, he ran up and down the ramparts seeking to organise defence. Some robber marked him, and shot him down with a matchlock. Presently help came to us from our men who hastened back from their fields to defend their home, and we beat off the marauders. When it was all over, they brought my grandfather home. The bullet had entered his breast, and there was no more than a faint spark of life when they brought him in. They say he opened his eyes once and said, "Oh, yes, I'll

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come back presently, for I must finish my picture", and his spirit passed. I think his mind had gone back to his leaving the picture to go to the fight. My granduncle, who was so much the elder that he had been a father to my grandfather, beat his breast and cried, "Oh my boy, Oh my boy, could I not give you a mouthful of food before sending you to your death!" and he was broken-hearted. To make a sad story short, they cremated him and performed his obsequies, but my granduncle was never the same man again. He spent most of his time at the door as though in expectation of somebody; and as he oldened, he took to muttering strange things such as, "No, he won't come", "Who knows what was in his mind?", "Oh, but he will!" and so he too passed away.'

The old man ceased, and we respected his silence. After a while, Farquhar said in a low voice :

'Where's the picture he painted that day?'

'It is inside.'

'Won't you kindly show it to us?'

'I have heard my elders say it should not be shown.'

'Why?'

'It is unfinished, and there may be faults in it. People might say it is not a good piece of work, and that would vex a workman. It might lower the artist in the estimation of people.'

'My dear sir, your artist was a hero and a genius, and has nothing to fear from detractors,—and we are not detractors. Do let us see the picture.'

'Very well then, so be it. I doubt whether I should have shown it if you had come by yourselves, but I cannot disoblige a lady, and she is eager to see. There was yet another reason—a very fanciful reason it may seem to you—why my granduncle was unwilling to let this picture be seen. His brother's last words had been that he would come again and finish the picture, and my granduncle believed he would do so.'

'Did your grandfather say he would come back?'

'Well, so at least they understood him. And it grew

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into a feeling in our house that our grandfather would be reborn in our midst to complete his picture. We did not wish to show it to others till he had come back and completed it. When my father was born, it is said my grand-uncle anxiously watched him for evidences of his father's genius, as a token that he had come again in his son to take up the unfinished work. But no. When I came, he looked for them in me. But again, no. He said, "My brother was a boy of his word ; he is sure to come some day ; take good care of the picture", and so he died. My father showed it once to our *guru*, and now I show it again as something in the lady's face makes me feel I might show it to her.'

He went inside the house again and brought two pictures of which he placed one before us.

I was spell-bound by the picture. There was magic in each line,—and I despair to convey it in words. It was as though the artist had caught and fixed the air, all tremulous and undulating with the music of the flute. Though the details were as in the other pictures we had seen, there was yet some indefinable difference which made it instinct with life and unearthly beauty. Emily gazed on it in breathless rapture.

'Is this the unfinished picture?' she asked at last.

'No. This other—' and he spread out the second picture before us.

'My God!' said Emily with a gasp.

We looked at it in silence for a while. It was a supreme picture.

'What did the artist intend painting below this cow, I wonder?' said Farquhar when he found his voice. There was a faint wavy line or two as of an outline commenced and broken off.

'I don't know. It was just as he was about to fill the canvas there that the alarm came, and he went out to die.'

I looked again, and it seemed to me that the artist had meant to put in another cow there ; but one couldn't be sure. Emily was still regarding the picture in silence. I asked the

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old man if no one had hazarded a guess as to what the artist's intention might have been.

'There is my daughter's little boy,' said the old man; 'he said something. Nobody else could make anything of it.'

'Sir,' said Farquhar, 'if you could sell me that picture, I would take it home with me and make your grandfather's name famous in my country. Will you give it to me?'

'Sir, how can I? My granduncle forbade us even to show it!'

'It is not for my own use or pleasure that I ask it,—it is to secure to your grandfather the recognition that is his due. It is for the glory of your village and your country.'

'But what if he returns as he promised?'

'Who? Your grandfather? Venerable sir, can you for a moment believe it? Just think!'

'What matters our thinking?' rejoined the old man. 'He knows best who promised. It is clearly our duty to keep the picture here waiting for him—and that was the wish of our elders also. The rest is as God wills.'

Farquhar merely said, 'All right, but please think about it again. We aren't in a hurry. We shall come again, in four or five days, and shall be very pleased to hear your decision.'

Emily did not seem to have heard this talk. She suddenly looked up from the picture.

'Shall I tell you what was in the artist's mind to paint here?'

'Do,' I said.

'It seems to me,' said Emily, with a flush on her cheeks, 'it seems to me there should have been here a calf on its eager way to the mother's milk, held in mid-career, and fed with the Divine melody. Whoso is fed with milk—even mother's milk—hunger again: but the nectar from the flute fills for evermore. Look, how all things in the picture show that the melody has just begun. The other picture is conventional; this one has seized the moment when the music began.'

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'Then what my grandchild said was true!' exclaimed the old man.

'What did he say?' we cried.

'He said, "Look how the Lord has even now conceived a thought, and raised the flute to his lips to give it expression. See how the first notes have enchanted the air, and look at this calf surprised on its way to the mother, and fed with music sweeter than milk!" That was what the boy said. And that is what Madam here says now.'

We marvelled at the boy's justness of perception; for really, the air seemed thrilling with music, and there was dawning inspiration on the brow of the Divine flutist.

Farquhar said :

'Bring up this boy of yours to be a painter,—believe me he will make a great one. Tell us when we come again four days hence whether you will give us the picture.'

Emily said nothing. Presently we rose to go, and the old gentleman saw us off with the usual parting gift of betel leaves and nut.

But we have no thought now of going there again for the picture. We still want it as keenly as ever; and it is also possible the old man may not resist the temptation of a high price,—but we shall not go, and this is why.

On our way back, Emily sat for a while on the stone steps of Kartavirya's pond. Farquhar fetched out our tiffin basket and we had tea.

'What a beautiful pond!' said Emily.

'Beautiful enough,' I replied, 'but there isn't much water in it now; and look, some fellow has prised off a few stones over there, to build an ugly little house with, very probably.'

'Oh brother,' she said, 'does it not occur to you that we are doing very much the same kind of thing? There isn't much water in the pond, it is true; but the pond itself is here nevertheless; and if only some one cared for it, and saw that weeds did not spring up and loosen the joints, some day—perhaps years hence—when water came, the pond would be

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there to hold it. I can almost hear the tinkling anklets and toe-rings of the generations of sweet joyous girls who must have passed up and down these beautiful steps. They may come again—as water may come again—if but the pond continued whole and good; but once pull out the stones, deface and desecrate the pond, and lo! it is but an ugly ditch which all will shun, and which can only become noisome with the return of water!'

'Quite true, Emily, but what are you driving at?'

'What? Do you ask? Why, this: We take away this picture because it is good, that statue because it is beautiful, and that other thing because it is desirable, and then what remains to this unfortunate country when she comes to herself, I should like to know? What shall we have done for her?'

'But don't you see we take these things only to proclaim the greatness of this country to the world, and not through mere lust of possession?'

'Much good will that kind of fame be to her! You tell this man to make his little boy a painter, and you take away his picture. Is that doing him a great lot of good?'

We got on our horses, and rode slowly homewards. After we had gone some little way Emily said to me:

'Have you heard, brother, of a belief among these people that sometimes the soul goes wandering forth from its body, leaving it temporarily untenanted, but intending to return to it. It may happen that, in the interval, some other spirit usurps that body to the deprivation of its proper owner.'

I said I had heard of such a belief.

'They call it *entry into another's body*. Now supposing a soul leaves its body for a while purposing to return, if this body should be hidden away or disfigured beyond recognition so that the soul returning cannot find or know it, how forlornly that homeless soul must wander in space!'

'True, but what a fancy!'

'Brother, it seems to me that the lovely body they call *Bharata Mata* (Mother India) is now in a trance, and that her children are seated weeping about her. But even now, her

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brow is flushing with the return of the soul. Shall we now deface her frame, deprive her of the things she holds sacred and beautiful, her necklace and rings and bracelets, with the result that the returning soul cannot recognise its own tenement? Is it not just as though we had rapt the body away? The mother's soul may return wishing to wipe her children's tears, but what if the body be not there? Shall we orphan her children? I don't think we ought to do this!

And Emily's eyes filled with tears. Farquhar looked away; his thoughts had probably gone to little George, and he pictured Emily in a trance and George waiting beside her. We rode home in silence, and decided this morning that we should not try to acquire that picture.

This occurrence has confirmed to me another thought I have had for some time. It may be that we can substitute our civilisation for the one these people have lost, but this would be really the usurpation by an alien soul of a body which is waiting for the return of its own.



The Indian Constitutional Experiment

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(1)

India has become a laboratory for Englishmen to make constitutional experiments. They have developed a special technique for this purpose. Every experiment is being preceded by an exhaustive enquiry by commissions and special committees, by voluminous reports from the Government of India and provincial governments, and by representations from interested parties and groups. Piles of data are collected, and with the help of experts final conclusions are drawn from them to form the basis of a fresh scheme of government. But it is curious to find that in spite of these mountains of labour a solution to the constitutional problem has not been discovered. Within a short period of twenty-five years two constitutions were framed for the country, tested, and finally given up as hopelessly inadequate. Englishmen are now engaged in framing a third constitution. The Minto-Morley Reforms were introduced in 1909 and extraordinary claims were made for them, even though they were condemned by the politically-minded classes of India as unsuited to the requirements of the country. Their criticism was then brushed aside—as is being done now—as originating from political extremism. But within eight years after the inauguration of these reforms, Parliament itself had to come out with a new policy enunciated in the famous declaration of August 1917 and pass a new Government of India Act in 1919. This Act was put into effect with a blow of trumpets and the new machine of Diarchy began its work. Its shortcomings became clear within a very brief period of its existence, and a Statutory

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(Simon) Commission had to be appointed in 1927 and entrusted with the work of making an exhaustive enquiry into the whole subject of the form of government best suited for the people of India. The conclusions of their report have been examined and re-examined during a period of five years, and their essence is to be found in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, on the basis of which a new scheme of government is shortly to be introduced.

There is nothing, however, to show that the latest experiment is going to succeed any better or have a longer lease of life than its predecessors. For it is the outcome of a series of reports which start with the same hypothesis, elaborate the same set of arguments, and arrive fundamentally at the same conclusions as the reports that preceded the legislation of 1909 and 1919. Everyone of these reports contains a chapter on 'The Conditions of the Indian Problem' which forms the starting point for constitution-making. The analysis of these conditions made in 1907 is not different from that contained in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report of 1918, or the Simon Commission Report of 1930, or the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report of 1934. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, for instance, states thus : 'Two dominating conditions will be quickly apparent to any one who turns to the records and reports. One is that the immense masses of the people are poor, ignorant and helpless, far beyond the standards of Europe; and the other is that there runs through Indian society a series of cleavages of religion, race and caste- which constantly threaten its solidarity, and of which any wise political scheme must take serious heed.' The Simon Commission has not a different tale to tell after the lapse of twelve years. 'The immense area and population of India, the diversities of race, creed and caste, the existence of the Indian States, the predominance in numbers of the rural population, the high percentage of illiteracy, and the standing menace of the North-West frontier, are all facts which no person, British or Indian, who has to deal with the constitutional problem of India can possibly

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ignore.' The Joint Parliamentary Committee echoes the same idea: 'It is inhabited by many races and tribes, speaking a dozen main languages and over two hundred minor dialects, and often as distinct from one another in origin, tradition and manner of life as are the nations of Europe.' These are the factors of the Indian situation that count with Englishmen and nothing else impresses them. The underlying unity of India, and the growth of political consciousness and of national aspirations do not appeal to them as being really significant. It is their blindness to the new facts in the situation that is really responsible for the failure of the constitutional experiments that they have so far made. From these failures one is forced to conclude that their analysis of the relevant facts is wrong, that they have not made the right approach to the problem, and that they may not have even the capacity to see the more important facts. Otherwise there is no reason why the constitutional superstructure which they have been raising is found to require such frequent remodelling.

Nothing like this has happened in those other parts of the British Empire like Canada, Australia, South Africa and Ireland where the constitutional problem was similar in character, so far as the relations between them and England were concerned. Canada and Australia are vaster in size than India; there is much diversity of race, language and religion in Canada as well as in South Africa. But the Canadian Constitution is as old as 1867. No need has arisen to bring about a change in it. The Australian Constitution goes back to 1900 and the South African Constitution to 1910.

One conclusion that emerges from this brief survey is that, until the time is ripe for the making of an Indian Constitution in India itself instead of in London—and the constitutions of Canada, Australia, South Africa and Ireland were not made in London—the stage of experimentation will not be over and stability cannot be introduced into any scheme of government that may be framed. The problem in India at present is entirely political. The question that requires an

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answer is, 'Who should have the ultimate political power?' Until an answer is found for this, the question of constitution-making which concerns itself with the devising of a satisfactory machinery for the exercise of political power cannot be said to really arise.

(2)

Constitutional experiments became necessary in India during this century because of the failure of those in power to discharge their responsibilities properly. It is this that has brought about an agitation for the transfer of power into the hands of other people, who may be reasonably expected to make a better use of it. The English bureaucracy in India has been in undisputed control over the affairs of the country for at least a century. No bureaucracy in the world had at any time the same splendid opportunities for promoting the welfare of the masses. Its sway was unquestioned; people had implicit faith in it. There was no opposition to it till very recently. There was no politically-minded class to contest with it for popular favour. The century during which they enjoyed all this unquestioned authority has been the most progressive century in the history of mankind. In their own home, England, liberal ideas were exercising their utmost influence. Mechanical inventions were being made use of to develop the material prosperity of the nation. Education became widespread. The standard of life was raised. The power-State became transformed into the welfare-State. This was the work of Englishmen in England. What about their work in India? The English bureaucracy of India who were the products of English Public Schools and English Universities, and who were imbued with the high traditions of English public life, satisfied themselves merely with the preservation of order in this country. Here is the picture of India drawn by the Joint Parliamentary Committee: 'The great majority of the people of India derive their living from the soil and practise for the most part a traditional and self-sufficient agriculture.'

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The average standard of living is low and can scarcely be compared even with that of the more backward countries of Europe. Literacy is rare outside urban areas, and even in these the number of literates bears but a small proportion to the total population.' No stronger evidence is required to point out the complete failure of the present holders of power to avail themselves of the glorious opportunities they had during all these years. This is at the root of all contemporary political agitation in India.

It is the common opinion held by most Englishmen that the backwardness of the people is the result of the peculiar geographical, social and economic conditions of the country and not of the system of government, that no government can control these conditions, remove the defects in them and do away with the backwardness of the people. But this is a wrong reading of the place of politics in the well-being of a community. Progress is always the result of a harmonious working of political, economic and social factors in a country. Each of them helps the others and is helped by them. None by itself is self-sufficient. For the better ordering of society and for the removal of social and economic ills, the State is essential. It represents force and power without which the opposing and conflicting elements in the community which stand in the way of progress cannot become reconciled. Historians are fond of praising the doctrine of neutrality observed by certain governments—especially imperialistic governments. But no doctrine has proved so harmful as this. In most cases it is only a euphemism for indifference and for toleration of social abuses and for a love of ease and comfort on the part of those in authority. The State has a positive duty in promoting the country's well-being. If countries in the West and a country like Japan in the East have attained such a high level of progress, it is not because all of them had no social or economic drawbacks but because governments in them have been energetic in removing those drawbacks and developing the countries in the right direction.

It is a matter for congratulation that the Joint Parlia-

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mentary Committee has realised this. It points out that, 'In the sphere of social administration, it is evident that a point has been reached where further progress depends upon the assumption by Indians of real responsibility for Indian social conditions.' But the Committee does not go far enough. It has taken only a limited view of the requirements of the situation. For, what is true of Indian social conditions is equally true of Indian economic and Indian political conditions. Progress in every one of these fields—and not merely in the social sphere—depends entirely on the assumption of real responsibility by Indians themselves. All these are mutually interdependent. To set up one authority to regulate social conditions and another to regulate economic conditions and a third to regulate political conditions is to make the governmental system weak and inefficient, introduce mutual conflict among the different authorities and prevent their action from producing right results. The life of the community is an organic unity. Different kinds of action are required to properly regulate it. Governmental action is one of them, and unless there is a unified government set up for this purpose the very objects of regulation are sure to be defeated.

(3)

The central defect of the constitutional experiment outlined by the Joint Parliamentary Committee—and this it shares with the previous experiments—lies essentially in this attempt at the compartmentalisation of government. It creates an artificial division where what is required is unity: and the basis on which it has brought about the division is an irrational one. It proceeds to set up two governments—one to be the custodian of power and the other to be held responsible for the promotion of social and economic welfare. The custodians of the instruments of power—the army, the navy, police, etc.—are the Governors and the Governor-General, assisted as of old by the civilian bureaucracy. The responsibility for welfare is laid on the Ministers and legislatures in the provinces and at the centre. There is no need to point

out that government is an effective instrument for promoting the well-being of the community, only to the extent to which it possesses coercive authority and the prestige which that authority brings along with it. That is the reason why where voluntary organisations and persuasive appeals fail, government succeeds. If those that are expected to undertake measures for furthering the material and social welfare of the community are denied this ultimate authority to coerce and use the instrument of compulsion, there is no prospect whatever of their obtaining success in their efforts. In the past the bureaucracy possessed the power to coerce as well as the responsibility for promoting welfare. Constitutional experiments in India are being made only with a view to transfer responsibility to Ministers while power is kept by the bureaucracy.

Another feature of these experiments is that, where there is a conflict between the custodians of power and the promoters of general welfare, it is the latter that have to yield to the former. Power becomes the end and not the means for bringing about progress. Moreover, conflicts arising between these two authorities are not submitted for arbitration by an impartial judicial tribunal, or by the electorate of the land who are the parties that are really affected by the conflict, but are settled by the custodians of the coercive authority. They have the controlling power over the actions of the ministers of welfare and the latter should so conduct themselves that they never come into clash with the former. It is in the light of these general observations that the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee has to be studied.

(4)

The Report is regarded as making a definite step in advance of the present system of government for its advocacy of 'provincial autonomy.' The question that has to be considered is the extent of the reality of autonomy that it recommends. There have been two conflicting views of provincial autonomy ever since the beginning of constitutional

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agitation in India on this subject—the view of the Pandits in the service of the Government of India, and the view of the leaders of Indian political thought. The freedom of the provincial government, in a sphere of its own, from the control of the central government of India, irrespective of the form of provincial government, is the essential characteristic of provincial autonomy from the point of view of the Pandits. In the view of Indian political leaders, the technical freedom from the control of the central government is not the essence of provincial autonomy, but it is the exercise of power in the provinces by a responsible ministry and an elected legislature. The autonomy that the Indian leaders have in mind is not autonomy to the Governor under which he becomes practically a dictator, but the autonomy of the ministry. The Pandits do not agree with this view. The (Muddiman) Reforms Enquiry Committee of 1924 stated that, 'No particular form of constitution whether in the central government or in the provinces is a necessary implication of the term. In their own spheres the constitution of the central government and of the provincial governments may be autocratic or democratic and the provincial governments may vary *inter se* as to their constitutions.' Sir Frederick Whyte also states in his book on 'India, A Federation' thus: 'Most Indian controversialists employ it to describe both the freedom of the provincial government from external control by the Government of India and the internal political condition of representative and responsible government. The true meaning of the word lies in the former interpretation.' The Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee practically agrees with the Pandits when it draws a distinction between 'provincial autonomy' and the manner of exercising it. It defines 'provincial autonomy' as the scheme 'whereby each of the Governors' provinces will possess an executive and a legislature having exclusive authority within the province in a precisely defined sphere, broadly free from control by the central government and legislature. This we conceive to be the essence of provincial autonomy, though no doubt there is room for wide differences of opinion

with regard to the manner in which that exclusive authority is to be exercised.' The Report describes the way in which it should be exercised and an analysis of it makes it clear that it should be exercised by the executive and legislature subject to the ultimate control of the Governor. Real power in the province is lodged with him and all other organs of government are made subordinate to him. There has always been a suspicion that this would be the kind of autonomy that the provinces are likely to get and this has been confirmed by the Report.

The real position of the Governor of a province is that of a representative of the central government. He is there to watch its interests, to receive instructions from it and to carry them out. There cannot therefore be real autonomy to the province so long as he is the person on whom this autonomy is conferred. The Report itself admits that, 'Where the Governor is exercising his special powers, is acting in his discretion, he must be constitutionally responsible to some authority, and that responsibility will be in the first instance to the Governor-General acting in his discretion, and through him to the Secretary of State and ultimately to Parliament.'

No elaborate argument is needed to show that the Governor will be the main spring of action and the real motor force in driving the machinery of provincial government in the proposed constitution. The Report itself says thus: 'We concur with everything which has been said by the Statutory Commission on the part which the Governors have played in the working of the Reforms of 1919, and we do not think that the part which they will play in the future will be any less important or valuable.' There can be no real responsible government in the provinces unless the part played by the Governor becomes less important and less valuable, but such a change is not under contemplation. Critics have pointed out the unreality of the so-called transfer of 'Law and Order' to the Ministers, to their not having any control over the Civil Services, to the possibility of their administrative actions and legislative policies being vetoed by the Governor

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in the exercise of his special responsibilities, and the numerous other direct and indirect ways in which he can take advantage of the communal groupings in the legislature and manipulate them with a view to keep his grip on the provincial government as a whole. The Governor will continue to be the pivot of provincial administration in future as he was in the past.

The Report proceeds to defend the controlling position of the Governor on the specious plea that the vital importance in India is that of a strong executive. This doctrine of a 'strong executive' as put forward by the Committee is a dangerous one and requires refutation. It is no doubt true that in the evolution of modern democracy a stage has been reached in most countries where it is found necessary to make the executive less dependent on the legislature than was the case in earlier times. Democracies originally started as protests against the arbitrary rule of the executive and therefore made the elected legislatures omnipotent. But experience has shown that the executive should not be quite at the mercy of parliaments, as that would lead to cabinet instability and inefficiency. As a matter of fact the Cabinet is now the controlling factor in England. Parliament has become really subordinate to it instead of being supreme over it. The movement for constitutional reform in France, which desires to give the Cabinet the power to dissolve the legislature, has for its object the strengthening of the executive. Most of the post-war democratic constitutions of Europe have made provision for strong executives independent of legislatures. But the conclusion which the Report tries to draw from movements like these is not warranted by facts. For, in every one of these cases the executive that is strengthened is an elected executive, an executive that commands the confidence of the people at large or of the legislatures themselves. It is not the strengthening of an executive that derives its authority from outside the State. There would be meaning in some constitutional machinery being devised for strengthening the provincial cabinets but

not for strengthening the Governor. Referring to the safeguards, the Report states that 'they represent on the contrary (to quote a very imperfect but significant analogy) a retention of power as substantial, and as fully endorsed by the law, as that vested by the Constitution of the United States in the President as Commander-in-chief of the Army.' But it forgets that the President derives his authority from the people while the Governor of a province is not elected by them. A strong executive is absolutely necessary, but it is an executive that commands the confidence of the people that requires to be strengthened.

It is from this standpoint that one has to examine the real significance of the abolition of Diarchy which is regarded as one of the cardinal features of the Report. When we look beneath the surface, we will have to say that either Diarchy has not been completely abolished, or, if it is abolished, it is in favour of all authority being concentrated in the Governor as was the case before 1919. The unity of provincial government is not the result of the provincial cabinet being made solely responsible for the whole field of administration. Has Diarchy been really abolished? The essence of Diarchy is the existence of two governments side by side, each controlling a certain number of departments. In the new provincial constitution the control over certain departments is vested in the Governor and of other departments in the Ministers. 'Law and Order,' the 'Police,' the 'Public Services,' the 'Department of Minorities,' are reserved to the Governor. The other departments are transferred. This is the practical effect of the limitations that have been imposed on the authority of Ministers in regard to matters relating to the Police and of the special responsibilities conferred on the Governor. The only difference between Diarchy in its old form and Diarchy in its new form is that, in the exercise of his powers in the reserved departments, the Governor will not in future be fettered by an executive council. He is the sole monarch of the situation, except for the possibility of the influence that may be exercised over him by the super-

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secretary. The additional powers conferred on the Governor, under which he can permanently place on the statute book his own Acts and appropriate revenues to discharge his special responsibilities and pass ordinances, amount to establishing in each province two governments instead of one. And this is the real meaning of Diarchy.

The only sense in which therefore Diarchy may be said to have been abolished is that in future the real authority in the province will be in the hands of the Governor. This is the ultimate significance of the special responsibilities conferred on him. These responsibilities have to be looked at as standards by which the Governor is to judge whether the provincial government is carried on well or ill by the Ministers. They give him a power of general review of the whole field of administration. This is one of the ingenious discoveries in the field of Indian constitutional experiment. These constitute what may be called the purposes of good government as conceived by the J.P.C., and they may be used for criticising the actions of the Ministers and the legislature, whatever be the department to which they relate. Referring to the scope of the Governor's special responsibility for the prevention of any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of the province, the Report says: 'Still less can we see any justification for restricting the Governor's action to the department of Law and Order, by which we suppose the Police department. There are many other branches of administration in which ill-advised measures may give rise to a menace to the peace or tranquillity of the province; and we can readily conceive circumstances in connection with land-revenue or public health, to mention no others, which might well have this effect.' Even in regard to public health, Ministers cannot have freedom of action. His responsibility for the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of minorities is of the same indefinite character and gives him any amount of scope for interference with Ministers' policies. In this land where every community is made to feel that it is a minority community, and where the list of such communities has shown a tendency to expand, there will be nothing to

prevent the Governor from taking every community under his beneficent control. The word 'legitimate' again is so very vague that it can be made to include a multitude of things. What legislation is there which will not affect the majority in one way and the minority in another? His special responsibility for the prevention of commercial discrimination is vaguer still. Even after drawing a distinction between administrative discrimination and legislative discrimination, between bills which are discriminatory in fact and those which are so in form, the Report feels that the discretion to be left to the Governor in this matter should not be restricted by any kind of mere statutory prohibitions. In their indefiniteness and the consequent all-comprehensiveness these 'special responsibilities' are like the 'due process' clause in the American Constitution. The net result of their presence in the provincial system is the abolition of Diarchy in favour of a unitary government under the sole control of the Governor.

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Within the short space of an article it is not possible to deal with the other aspects of the Report. Credit is given to it for its recognition of the principle of 'central responsibility.' But here again it is the mere shadow of responsibility that is granted to the Ministers. Defence and External Affairs are a reserved subject under the direct control of the Governor-General and remain outside the ministerial sphere. The Report does not hold out any hopes of the early Indianisation of the army, and in its absence there is no prospect of the transfer of these departments in any conceivable future into the hands of Ministers. The special responsibility of the Governor-General for the safeguarding of the financial stability and credit of the Federation, gives him complete and effective control over the finances of the country and consequently over all the transferred departments. Every one is aware of the dependence to which the transferred departments in the provinces were reduced to the reserved departments in consequence of Finance having been made a reserved

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subject. The Reserve Bank is the custodian of India's banking and currency system which the Ministers cannot touch. Railway policy and rates are to be controlled by the Statutory Railway Board over which the Ministers have no control. The industrialisation of the country which all the well-wishers of the land have been looking to, and which can be carried out only through a policy of protection, has been made impossible owing to the 'prevention of commercial discrimination' having been included among the special responsibilities of the Governor-General. This gives him an all-over-riding authority on tariff legislation. An impossible task is imposed on the Ministers whenever they wish to alter the tariff policy. They should be able to prove that the alteration will promote the economic interests of India and not merely injure the interests of the United Kingdom. No economist, however painstaking he may be in collecting and analysing all the available data, can succeed in this. A policy of protection is sure to injure the interests of England; there is no guarantee that it will promote the interests of India. The latter is only a probability: the former is a matter of certainty. In such a situation the Ministers cannot be said to have any responsibility in industrial and commercial matters. Even when a trade agreement with a third party is more advantageous to India than a similar agreement with England, the Report lays down that regard must be paid to the general range of benefits secured by the partnership with England and not merely to the usefulness of the partnership in relation to the particular commodity under consideration at the moment. Who will have the boldness to deny that India is not in general benefited by her partnership with England—whatever that partnership may mean?

In the light of the recommendation for the separation of Burma, one should be thankful to the Committee for not recommending the separation of any other part of India and placing it under the direct control of the Home Government. The agitation set up for a province of Pakstan made up of the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, Baluchistan etc., to be

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constituted into an entirely separate territory might have been taken advantage of for such a purpose. As much support could have been obtained for such a scheme from a certain section of Indians as for the other recommendations in the Report. It is therefore a matter for gratitude that the boundaries of India have 'been kept intact except for the separation of Burma. An All-India Federation is one of the promises held out by the Report, although it is not known when it will be achieved.

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There has been a good deal of comment on safeguards. Properly understood, the essence of a constitution is the safeguards it embodies. No one need be frightened by the term. Written constitutions have come into vogue because of the distrust entertained about the way in which political power would be exercised. In every age and in all countries the tendency has been for those in power to abuse their authority, sometimes consciously and at other times unconsciously. They have also a tendency to regard what is good for them as being necessarily good for all. The provisions in a constitution act as a check against such misuse of authority. The incorporation of a list of fundamental rights, universal franchise, separation of powers, judicial independence etc., have been traditionally regarded as some of the necessary safeguards. What is however to be noted is that the actual safeguards that are included in any particular constitution depend on those parties and groups that obtain a hand in the making of that constitution. In the making of the proposed Indian Constitution the dominant hand is that of the British, although they had a band of faithful allies in the Indian Princes and the communalists. The safeguards therefore that it contains are safeguards which the British have found necessary to prevent any abuse of authority by the Indian executives and the Indian legislatures, supplemented by a few others in the interests of the Princes, the communalists, and those sections of Indians who, like the Zamindars, have

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acquired certain vested interests. It is therefore wrong to assume that the new constitution has no fundamental rights included in it. All these safeguards are the fundamental rights which the makers of the constitution thought it essential to provide for. It may be that, from the point of view of nationalist opinion in India, there is even greater need for safeguards against the abuse of power by the British and very little has been done to include them in the constitution. This is the tragedy of the whole affair, though there is no mystery about it. The struggle in India is between nationalism and the ideals of general welfare on one side, and communalism and vested interests on the other. For the moment nationalism has suffered a severe defeat, and it is this defeat that is registered and recorded in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee and the constitution that it has recommended.

Indian Art in London

(*A Note on the Recent Exhibition*)

By OSWALD COULDREY M.A., (OXON)

I approached the India Society's Exhibition of Modern Indian Art from a particular angle, which would have been that of many readers of *Triveni*. I was bitterly disappointed; but my disappointment shall be expressed as cheerfully as possible. If the exhibition gave as inadequate a notion of modern Indian art generally as it did of that part of it of which I happen to know something in detail, then modern Indian art generally is in a very flourishing condition indeed.

For the show as a whole was impressive; much more so than any of the same subject previously seen in London. It was held in the new Burlington Galleries, where some of our best exhibitions are regularly held; was opened by the Duchess of York about a fortnight before Christmas, and remained open until nearly the eve of the festival. The Galleries have two large rooms, two small chambers, and a corridor. The first and smaller of the two large rooms was wholly occupied by the Bombay pictures and sculptures, about a hundred altogether. The corridor was hung with architectural drawings and designs, likewise mostly from Bombay. Most of the other pictures, Nos. 87 to 354, were in the larger of the two main rooms, which is more than twice the size of the other. One side and one end of the room and a little more were covered by pictures described in the catalogue as from 'Delhi, Punjab and the Central India Provinces,' and numbering about 150. About 100 pictures from Bengal occupied the rest of the other long side of the room and most of the other end. On what was left of this last, which was the corner about the door, were the Madras pictures, numbering fifteen.

Even these poor fifteen so-called 'Madras' pictures

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were a pitifully scratch lot, and looked as if they had been collected with difficulty to make some sort of a show that might cover the artistic nakedness of our 'benighted' Presidency. Six of the fifteen were by Mr. D. P. R. Chowdhury. They were accomplished and remarkably versatile water-colours. They may have been painted in Madras, but since scores like them may be seen at any better-class English provincial show of water-colours, they could hardly be called racy of the soil. Nor could the rather similar 'Night Scene' (No. 343) of Mr. K. G. Dastider. Mr. Syed Ahmed's 'Fakir' was one of the two or three pictures in the whole exhibition which I would most willingly have possessed. Near the classical Mogul, it had yet a freedom of its own, and was wonderfully fresh and original both in drawing and colour. But though a little host in itself, or shall we say a Hyderabadi contingent, it was contingent after all and accidental, extraneous aid and undeserved. There remain Mr. Desouza's 'After the Bath' and six pictures which from the names appended seem to have been the work of real South Indian painters. Three of these six were lent by the Indore State!

The three genuine South Indian pictures which the exhibition owed to the enterprise and 'valuable co-operation and support' (as the Hon. Organizer calls it in the Foreword) of the Madras Regional Committee deserve to be mentioned separately, for their outstanding good fortune if not for their outstanding merit. They were the 'Flight of Prithviraj' by M. Venkatarathnam; 'Devadasi' by A. Balakrishnan; and 'Ravens' by K. Madhava Menon. The first, an individual and vital drawing in line, delicately tinted, I have somewhere seen before, either awake or dreaming. Of the second I have no very clear recollection, except that it had the distinction of being sold. The third was like a Chinese picture and one of the most accomplished and impressive designs in the show. For its beauty and size it was probably also the cheapest (£5). Most of the pictures seemed to be overpriced.

Of the three South Indian pictures lent by the Indore

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State 'Chandbibi of Ahmadnagar,' by K. Venkatappa, might have been a Mogulai miniature of the eighteenth century. Before looking at the catalogue I took one of the others, Mr. A. M. Shastri's line drawing, 'Offering to the Sun God,' to be a work of Adivi Bapirazu; and surely it belongs to the same school. The third Indore loan was Damerla Rama Rao's 'Emperor Bimbisara,' a slight but accomplished study in the manner of Ajanta, or rather of some of Lady Herringham's pale reflections of it in water-colour.

Two other works of our ill-starred but ever-young Andhra master (more baldly listed in the catalogue as 'D. Rama Rao, the late,' and even once as 'D. R. Rao, the late,') were exhibited, but among those of the school that made him and not with those (or rather where those should have been) of the school that he made. One was 'Water Carriers' (46), obtained I know not whence, for the catalogue was very grudging of acknowledgments. It is a slight work and rather wanting compression, but interesting as an experiment in the use of a subdued and subtle system of lighting in combination with a decisive linear style. The other was the 'Krishna Lila,' which I lent myself, and which was well displayed in the middle of the first room. For beauty of drawing and perfection of colour and rhythm, there was probably nothing finer in the show. What a splendid mural design might have been based on it! Strangely, a large 'Mural Panel' on the same subject by Y.K. Shukla (No. 72), was hung almost immediately over it, and was more widely noticed in the reviews, I think, than any other picture. It was gayer though not lovelier in rhythm as in colour and mood than Ram's, but otherwise bore a distinct resemblance to it. Whether this was due simply to accident and the subject, or whether the painter had ever seen Ram's picture, I do not know. After my first sight of the show I met this young painter at Mr. Gladstone Solomon's, but as I did not then know that he was the painter of the panel I could not ask him, as I wish I had. He seemed to think Ram as a sort of ancient, having joined the school in '27, or two years after Ram's early death. I understood that he is now studying in

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the Academy schools here, and for the moment inclines to Impressionism.

But why in the name of all the gods of art was nothing shown of the work of the Andhra school, which Rama Rao founded in his native Rajahmundry, and which still holds annual exhibitions there? Why was there nothing of Varada Venkataratnam's, or Ch. Satyanarayana's of Coconada, or Y. Subba Rao's, or of the talented ladies of the Damerla family? And what again of that other group of Adivi Bapirazu and his fellows, who blossomed at Masulipatam? I have seen photographs enough of the work of all these painters to be sure that twice as much wall as those fifteen so-called Madras pictures occupied could have been easily filled with Andhra work alone, and well up to the standard of the rest of the room. And could not a loan have been obtained of Rama Rao's own masterpieces from the Damerla House at Rajahmundry? At this distance I can only ask these questions and express a grieved astonishment. I hope the Editor of this magazine will be able to ventilate the matter further, and to pass a vote of censure where it is due. For it appears that Indian art and the South of India, as well as the India Society and the London public, have been very ill-served by somebody.

Return, Alpheus! the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams, and now my oat proceeds

to notice the rest of the exhibition with as much composure and as little envy as the circumstances admit. The Bombay pictures in the first room made by far the most imposing group at first sight. Apart from skilful arrangement this was largely the result of size efficiently mastered. The painters had learnt to express themselves with assurance on a larger scale than is usual in the other provinces, or has been usual in India for many centuries. The flawless execution of such ambitious works as Mr. R. G. Chimulkar's 'Spirit of Art' (73) and 'Despair' (40), or of Mr. J. D. Gondhalekar's 'Illusion' was very remarkable. But I felt more than once

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that the painter in the pride of his craft had sought size for its own sake, that his design would have been more effective on a smaller scale. Thus Mr. Gondhalekar's 'Divided Devotion' (12) would have been delightful at half the size, but now seemed hardly powerful enough to carry its own weight. But Mr. Shukla's 'Mural Panel' above mentioned (72) looked not at all too big for itself, nor indeed did the mural designs generally, but only Mr. R. N. Parekh's (78) was comparable with Mr. Shukla's in mastery of drawing and design.

In this room there were half a dozen pieces of excellent sculpture. The most remarkable were Mr. R. P. Kamat's 'Exile,' rather like an Expulsion from Eden in a modernized Rodinesque style, and Mr. K. C. Roy's 'Harmony,' perhaps a couple of Siddhas, not unlike the other, except that an 'Indian air,' not without charm, had been added to it.

Among the Bengali pictures in the next room I fell deeply in love with Mr. S. Ch. Sen's 'Morning Flower' (279). Indeed there was not a picture in the show that I so much desired, but its price (£ 31) was far beyond me. It represented, I suppose, a Sudra woman gathering a wild flower, perhaps for an offering or adornment. Like most of the Bengali work it was quite small, and perhaps the style of it was based on the Mogul, but it had a fresh and sober truth and sweetness of colour that was all its own, and I never saw another picture at all like it. If the English pre-Raphaelite painters had painted small in water-colour as they should have done, and if one of them had with adequate knowledge and sympathy painted an Indian subject, it might have been something like this. Apart from this picture, of the painter of which I know nothing and found perhaps one other work, I could see nothing from Bengal that challenged the supremacy of the group that first made the school famous, Dr. Abanindranath Tagore and Messrs. Nanda Lal Bose and Asit K. Haldar and G. N. Tagore. Two line drawings by Mr. Haldar were especially charming. Dr. Tagore's 'Illustrations to the Arabian Nights' (235-266) were the most vital pictures in the show, full of beauty and variety and artistic enterprise, of wit

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and poetry and impish fun. Why does not he or another Indian painter illustrate for us the 'Adventures of the Ten Princes,'¹ or the 'Ocean of the Rivers of Story,'² of which the 'Arabian Nights' are only a belated echo?

But if these approved masters still bore away the palm, I still saw in this section several examples of a type of picture that was new to me and that appeared to have great possibilities, although none of the examples shown appeared quite to realise them. The type was larger than was usual on the wall and generally represented a gathering of the folk in a wide landscape setting treated rather crudely and childishly, words of praise nowadays in art-criticism and associated with what is called 'the innocence of the eye.' 'The Bride's Departure' by R. N. Chakrabarty (298); 'Market Place' by Tarak Nath Basu (306); and 'Bathing in the Ganges' by S. K. Mazumdar (298) were the principal examples. I saw a smaller one, without the ruggedness which these affected, on the wall near the Madras pictures, and liked it much better, indeed I found it charming; I think it must have been 'Immersion of the Goddess Durga' by Susil Chandra Sen (336), but I only now realise that, if so, it was apparently by the painter of my favourite 'Morning Flower.' The biggish, anonymous 'Storm' (269), rather like a Japanese print, was very successful and interesting.

So much for the walls assigned to the Bengali school; but indeed a large proportion of the pictures on those labelled 'Delhi, Lucknow, and Central India Provinces' appeared from the names attached to be by Bengali painters, and we saw that the same thing happened in the Madras section. I suppose this is because Bengal supplies India with art masters. I saw Mr. Promode Chatterjee's dignified 'Asoka' (154; from Indore) thus abroad. Many of the Lucknow pictures rivalled those on the Bengal wall in liveliness, while preserving an individuality of their own. Moreover they were remarkably cheap, (from £1 to £5, mostly nearer £1), whereas most of the pictures in the

¹ *Dasakumara-Charitra.*

² *Katha-Sarit-Sagara.*

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show were overpriced. Consequently the Lucknow pictures were almost all sold, and very few others. I tried to buy more than one myself but was always too late. Remarkable were Mr. Sharadendu's 'Dhritarashtra' (186) and indeed his other pictures, none like another; Mr. Bishnudas Haldar's 'Offering' and 'Shooting Star' (which was more like a comet); and Mr. Brij Mohan Nath Jiga's delightfully conservative paintings in lacquer (204 & 206).

On the same wall as some of these, but not from Lucknow, 'India's Great Politician' (R. G. Vijayavargi, 161) had power but was (appropriately?) inscrutable; Roop Krishna's 'Mythic Dance' (159) was a vital design. Near was a picture by Mr. M. A. R. Chughtai which was reproduced in the July-August number of *Triveni* as a frontispiece (142, 'Qalandar') and there were five other works from the same sensitive hand. Hereabouts also were some exquisite pictures in the strictly traditional style by Ganga Baksh; of which one at least fetched £10, as few of the modern pictures did. Among the Baroda pictures in the staircase room were three others no less learned and accomplished, but in a rather less delicate tradition; the painter, Huzuri Ram, if I mistake not.

Another small room was devoted to works without colour, etchings, lino-prints, line and wash drawings. Mr. Mukul Dey's clever etchings pleased me less than some of his early works that I used to see, but by this time I was perhaps tired of appreciation. In the middle of the back wall of this little room, like an idol in a sanctum, was a wash drawing by the great Rabindranath, at which I gazed with reverence but without understanding. It was called 'Devatma Himalaya,' and indeed in some ways it suggested a ghost, and in others a glacier.

Natya-Kala

(*HISTRIONIC ART*)

By T. RAGHAVACHARI

The function of song, verse and speech on the stage is to enhance the glory of the histrionic art and not to usurp its place. Verbosity is not always a virtue, particularly so on the stage. Capacity to produce the best effect with as few words as possible is the mark of culture and also of true histrionic talent. When I say so, I am keenly alive to the psychology of the spectator and still I say that the function of true histrionic art is to keep the words in the background, and keep them there until absolutely necessary to trot them out. A good pantomime, a glorious Kathakali, bear evidence to this fact. A well-cultured and freedom loving mind loves simplicity and directness. A small mind in fetters finds joy in mere words, phrases and garish descriptions. A real actor is more often than not handicapped by words and phrases. As the great English Bard says it will be all 'words, words,' and nothing but words. Verses and songs are even more dangerous foes of the histrionic art. I am not one of those who would have verses and songs chivvied out of a play. Music has a place on the stage : the same it has in life. Otherwise music on the stage is unreal, artificial, and chokes out the true art.

On the present day South Indian stage, words and music have mercilessly elbowed out the histrionic art. It is a veritable hurdle and sack race for the poor actor. He is compelled to start with the weight of the grandiloquent words, phrases and descriptions forged for him by the playwright. The poor author cannot be blamed either. *Indians love words*, and the author is naturally filled with an ambition to display his erudition and command of words and phrases. The actor has to mouth them and spit them in the auditorium. To the

distinguished assembly in the auditorium (Madras and Bangalore especially), every neat little turning of a high sounding word or phrase is art. Not one in a hundred considers whether the language, the gesture, the facial play of the actor correctly portray the *bhava* of the situation. It is enough if the mouthing is clear and loud and accompanied by any artificial pose. Take for instance the role of a Shivaji, a Kabir, or a Ramadas. Shivaji is known to be a Mahratta hero who triumphed over the Mahomedans and built up a glorious empire. Our audience is therefore satisfied if the following conditions are fulfilled by the actor. He should possess a good, well-built figure. He should display a long nose. He should look daggers at one and all. He should speak loud and in a commanding voice. He should walk with a high step. He should sing verses with all the flourishes of *ragam*, and the aforesaid verses should belittle the Mussalmans and describe musically patriotism, love of country, and what our old heroes did. The subtle workings of Shivaji's mind, his mastery over his emotions, his great charming personality, his devotion to his mother and Guru are all unimportant details, which the audience do not look for in an actor. Take Kabir. He is supposed to be a *Rama-bhakta*. Therefore he should always sing of the glory of Rama, about the hollowness of the world we live in and about the beauties of the world above to which we may or *may not* go. Kabir should always walk in the path of heaven which is traditionally full of thorns : and consequently he should step on the stage gingerly and walk in a measured march like a machine. Kabir's faith in mundane life, his practical wisdom, his furious onslaught against caste and convention, his vigorous preaching against hypocrisy, and his rapturous ecstatic moods are foreign to the audience. If an actor portrayed the true, living, robust, humour-loving, caste-breaking Kabir, I am afraid the audience would turn away in disgust and yearn for the thorn-treading seeker of Rama in the skies. Oftentimes I have been amused at my Sanatanist friends applauding Kabir who was a caste-breaker out and out.

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In other words, our Shivajis, our Kabirs, our Ramadases and many of our favourite heroes and heroines are applauded mainly because they can mouth the language in a loud and clear manner, can sing verses and songs in time and out of time, and sometimes because they can turn an ankle, shake a finger or grin a smile, irrespective of the propriety of such things.

Now take Ramadas. The audience expect him to be a miniature Kabir. Tradition requires he should cover himself up completely with *namams* (caste-marks) to denote that he has covered himself up with piety. He should display a profuse growth of hair all over, to indicate that his very hair-roots have grown godly and are shooting upwards, and he must sing and dance. Mind, he should sing abundantly and it would be better if he could render some old pieces which the original Ramadas is alleged to have bequeathed to the world. To all this should be added (in the jail scene) a movement of tearing one's hair; a crazy disposition of one's arms and legs; and a vivid rolling of the eye which may denote the painful feeling caused by the insertion of a cork-screw into it, as well as any other feeling. Then you have a Ramadas who will be at once hailed by the audience as an 'Abhinava Ramadas'. The transformation of the matter-of-fact Gopanna into a Ramadas, the gradual working out of that change, does not interest the audience. Nor do the pangs of sacrifice suffered by Ramadas in surrendering his boy or surrendering his freedom. It is not easy to portray the feelings of one who is ready to surrender his all and at the same time is burdened with the ignorance of a belief more in the efficacy of conventional worship, of a belief that God could be angry with human beings, and who like a child cries for a vision of God in flesh and blood. Who would care to look for such things in an actor! Ramadas was not a perfected *Bhakta*. He was placed in the *Bhakti Marga* by Kabir and was plodding onwards slowly, at times beset by harrowing doubts. The real Ramadas would be a stranger to our audience.

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I have no hesitation in saying that words, verses, songs and certain conventional antics make up the histrionic art of the present day South Indian stage, whether it is Telugu, Canarese, or Tamil. Words and music have so far usurped our stage that our plays are slowly but surely degenerating into variety entertainments where the actors are bound to sing any song or do anything, whenever there is a call from the auditorium. It is pure fancy to call a present day South Indian performance a 'Drama.' The play is nothing but a novel put into dialogue form and the production is nothing but a *Kalakshepam* done by more than one Bhagavathar. It is a great pity that even our educated people, some of them reputed to be authorities on Art, are actually encouraging such performances.

Keralee-Nritham or Mohini Attam

By G. VENKATACHALAM

When Mata Hari, the Red Dancer and War Spy, was questioned about her antecedents, she is reported to have said that Malabar was her birthplace and she was trained as a temple dancer in one of the subterranean shrines there.

This was, of course, a pure fabrication, but it will be interesting to speculate why she concocted this story: whether she was in the know of things or whether it was just a shrewd guess.

Whatever may be the truth behind this, Mata Hari's intuition or artistic instinct did not play her false, for she must have somehow felt—or did anybody tell her?—that Malabar was not only a land of magic and medicine but also of dance arts.

This narrow strip of land between the ghats and the sea is very intriguing indeed, especially to students of art and anthropology. Here you find quaint customs, strange usages and singular social laws, differing from those of the rest of India.

Women here, legally at any rate, enjoy greater freedom than women of other provinces. The racial type is slightly different from the neighbouring Tamils or the Karnatakas. Its magic and modes of living have some resemblance to those of the island races.

Here you meet the remnants of the oldest Jews, the most ancient Christians, the earliest Arab settlers, and also some of the oldest dance and dramatic arts of India. Though these dance arts can be traced to one common source, they distinctly bear the stamp of its special genius.

Mohini Attam is a dance of that character. It is 'Bharata Natyam' as evolved and perfected in Kerala, and though it follows closely the science and art of Bharata, it has its own

style and technique, its peculiar idioms and expressions, coloured considerably by Kathakali and other allied arts of Malabar.

This dance is usually performed by women, even as Kathakali is usually performed by men only. That is the traditional method, but it is possible to introduce the male element in this dance, in the interpretation of stories like the *Geeta Govinda*, as it is possible to introduce women dancers in Kathakali as Ragini Devi and Gopinath or Menaka and Gopal Pillay have successfully done.

The origin of Keralce-Nritham is traced to a Prince of Travancore who lived a hundred years back, but that is only a popular belief. It is likely that this art was greatly patronised by that prince even as 'Kuravanchi Koottu' was patronised by the Tanjore king, Sarfoji, and that poets of those periods composed songs for the dances under the royal command. It was a fashion among certain princes of ancient India to appropriate the authorship of plays and poems created by artists of their courts.

There are interesting similarities between these two dances. They are both *lasya* type of dances, both deal mainly with love themes and are therefore of sensuous character. Mohini Attam is richer in its gesture vocabulary while Kuravanchi has more complex foot-work and rhythmic movements. Being of a *lasya* nature they are extremely graceful and appeal more to the senses than to the soul. It is true that there are a lot of repetitions both in gestures and movements, but that is inevitable as the art is highly conventionalised and tradition-bound as the *dasi attam* of South India.

There is, however, this difference between the Tanjore Nautch and the Malabar Mohini dance; the dancer in the latter sings the whole time as she dances, and the chorists do not lead but follow the dancer in singing. The musical accompaniments are about the same, and the 'Nattuvan', or the teacher of the dancer, does not accompany the artist.

The songs are mostly descriptive and are set to both

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classical and popular tunes. They generally describe the love pangs of a maiden or the disappointment of a lover, the agony of separation or the joy of union, and all these are cleverly conveyed by suggestive facial expressions and significant gestures.

Every emotion has its appropriate rhythm and movement, and as the result of long training and practice, they are displayed with an ease and a mastery that is amazing. The art, highly formalised as it is, is nevertheless full of freshness and charm; and, of course, the personality of the artist counts much in such arts.

Mohini Attam is one of the forgotten arts in Kerala today. It was practised by an appreciable number of women even as late as the beginning of this century, but today it is practically unknown and is seldom seen in its homeland.

There is no special caste, like the Devadasis, to preserve the art or its traditions. Even the few who have learnt it from the old teachers are not eager to show their art and fight shy of the public.

Thanks to the efforts of the Kerala Kalamandalam, one of them has now come forward to dance before the public and also to teach young aspirants. Kalyani Amma is not a professional dancer, in the sense Devadasis are, and she is today a keen and enthusiastic exponent of this art.

At the invitation of Rabindranath Tagore she went recently to Santiniketan to train some of the students there, and her work was greatly appreciated by the Poet and his pupils. In fact, the leading dancer in the Tagore troupe, Mr. Ghosh, was trained for sometime in the Kalamandalam and since then another student from there, Mr. Sinha, had also training in Kathakali. India's foremost dancers like Menaka, Shrimati, Jamuna, Nandini, Uday Shankar, have all sought inspiration in this direction, and such mutual appreciation and understanding is one of the hopeful signs for the future of dancing in this country.

Of all the dance and dramatic arts of Kerala, such as Kummi, Kaikottikali, Thullal, Chakiarkoothu, Kathakali,

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Mohini Attam has a better chance of being appreciated in other parts of India and being learnt by a larger number of dancers, and both the Kalamandalam and Kalyani Amma will be only too happy to welcome students from all over India and Ceylon and train them in a form of dance art that is purely Indian and assuredly classic.

H. W. Massingham

By C. L. R. SASTRI, B. Sc.

'Antonio Stradivari has an eye
That winces at false work and loves the true.'

ROBERT BROWNING

(1)

It is difficult to believe that Massingham is no more : difficult even now, a decade after his death. It shows the greatness, as well as the loveliness, of the man. Such spirits seem really to be immortal. Massingham was a live wire : he had what I may call eternal freshness of youth. He was not only a journalist amongst journalists : he was, also, a man among men. His soul was like a star and dwelt apart. 'Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!'—thus Keats apostrophised the nightingale. We may well take a leaf from the poet's book and say, unreservedly, of such as Massingham that they at least ought to be exempt from the calamities that assail our more ordinary selves. Comparisons may be odious. But I have no doubt that, in this ultra democratic age, it will do us immense good if, now and then, we pause to ruminate on the almost astronomical distance that separates us from those rare spirits whom a benign Providence periodically sends into our midst. The greatest of fallacies is that which informs us that all men are born equal. I have no quarrel with it except in the small (or large) detail of its being untrue to the hard facts of life. All men, unfortunately, are *not* born equal ; and since it is the prevailing state of affairs we shall do well to salute such as are immeasurably above us—salute them as reverently as in us lies. Massingham was such a man. May he be saluted for ever !

(2)

Massingham was, first and foremost, a journalist. I may go so far even as to say that he was nothing else. He lived

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for journalism. He gave his all to it. It is a moot point whether it would not have gone better with him, in the end, if he had not so completely identified himself with that hardest of task-mistresses. I sometimes think that it would have been splendid, both for him and for us, if he could have had the strength to cold-shoulder the dame for long spells at a time. I am appalled by the consideration of what extraordinary talents are often placed at the service of journalism—talents that are not always rewarded as they ought to be. Unless the journalist in question takes to book-writing also, his fame has little chance of surviving him, has little chance, that is, of sailing unhurt along the stream of time: being, at best, confined to his own generation. Journalism, as I have already written, is a hard task-mistress: it takes all, or almost all, from others, and gives very little in return. It is, therefore, a pity that some of the greatest intellects have given the major part of their abilities to it: to alter the words of the poet slightly, they have given up to journalism what was meant for mankind.

(3)

Massingham was not only a great journalist: he was a great editor as well. Now, this distinction is not so idiotic as it may, at first sight, appear. Every editor is a journalist: every journalist, however, is not an editor—and, what is more, can not become even if, like Humpty Dumpty, he tries ‘with both hands.’ A great editor is a *rare ave in terris*: this kind cometh not out but by prayer and fasting. Massingham was not only a great editor: he was the greatest editor of his time: a time, too, when there was no lack of great editors in England. There were, for instance, C. P. Scott, J. L. Garvin, A. G. Gardiner, and J. A. Spender. But Massingham outshone all of them, even as Mount Everest out-distances its neighbouring giants, Kanchinganga and Nanga Parbat and others. He was, if I may say so, the tallest poppy among those tall poppies. Garvin, indeed, acknowledged as much in his obituary notice of him. ‘The Sicilian expedition, is it or is it not, the finest

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thing you ever read in your life?'—so the poet Gray asks after reading again the Seventh Book of Thucydides. A similar question may well be put in regard to Massingham's editorship. What I mean is brought out more clearly and vividly by Mr. Shaw. He concludes his tribute to Massingham in this fashion :

'As I write these lines comes the news of the death of our friend and contemporary, William Archer. The two vacant places seem to make a prodigious gap in the surviving front rank of late Victorian journalism. But Archer, like myself, was a journalist only, inasmuch as he wrote for the papers to boil his pot. Massingham was the perfect master journalist: the born editor without whom such pot-boiling would have been for many of us a much poorer and more sordid business. If he had left behind him a single book, it would have spoilt the integrity of his career and of his art. I hope I have made it clear that this was his triumph, and not his shortcoming. I could lay my hand more readily on ten contributors for his successor than on one successor for his contributors. A first-rate editor is a very rare bird, indeed: two or three to a generation, in contrast to swarms of authors, is as much as we get; and Massingham was the first of that very select bight.'

(4)

There is, indeed, no common ground of comparison between him and the others: you cannot, as the saying is, add four pounds of butter to four O'clock. When Massingham died, something went out of English journalism: which something, I dare to say, has not yet been replaced. The gap is still there: yawning like a chasm: Massingham was the *nonpareil* of editors: no wonder his place continues to be vacant. It may be true that there is nobody in this world who is, or whose services are, indispensable. In one sense, no doubt, it works out like that: the world goes on—or, rather, the work of the world goes on—though individuals disappear like rain-drops on a window-pane. But this, I think, is to take a superficial view of things. The work may go on, but what

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about the *quality* of the work? There is, certainly, a deterioration there. Sensitive souls can feel it, though they may not always be able to define it, to give it 'a local habitation and a name.' Mr. H. M. Tomlinson expresses it beautifully in his book, *Gifts of Fortune* (Heinemann). He is on the Chesil Bank, when a telegram arrives intimating the news of Conrad's death. Mr. Tomlinson lets himself go in this wise:

'Somehow life seems justified only by some proved friends and the achievements of good men who are still with us. Once we were so assured of the affluence and spiritual vitality of mankind that the loss of a notable figure did not seem to leave us any the poorer. But to-day, when it happens, we feel a distinct diminution of our light. That has been dimmed of late years by lusty barbarians, and we look now to the few manifestly superior minds in our midst to keep our faith in humanity sustained. The certainty that Joseph Conrad was somewhere in Kent was an assurance and a solace in years that have not been easily borne.'

This is fine; and it can be applied in its entirety to the loss we have sustained by the death of Massingham in August 1924. The certainty that 'Massingham' was somewhere in 'London' was an assurance and a solace in years that have not been easily borne.

(5)

Massingham is remembered chiefly by his editorship of the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Nation*. I am not competent to speak of the former. I can, however, thanks to 'whatever gods there be,' speak of the latter. I have—or so I fancy—some knowledge of English Weeklies: among which I have liked immensely only three: the *Nation* under Massingham; the *Saturday Review* and later, the *Week-end Review*—both under the editorship of Mr. Gerald Barry; and of these three the *Nation* under Massingham was by far the best. It 'flamed' if I may say so, 'In the forehead of the morning sky.' A great editor stamps, or imprints his personality, so to speak,

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upon his paper: it pervades the paper from the first page to the last. Any journalist may, and can, 'edit' a paper: it is only the born editor who can imbue it with his individual flavour. In this sense we can say: 'O, the *Nation*! Mr. Massingham's paper!', 'O, the *Manchester Guardian*! Mr. C. P. Scott's paper!' From this point of view, how many great editors does England possess now? I had better not give the answer; there would be too many wigs on the green.

Massingham, indeed, was the *Nation*. In this connection, I think I cannot do better than quote from Mr. H. M. Tomlinson again, who was his assistant during the last six years of his editorship.

'It was a little distracting, at first, to meet a journalist who was punctilious and inexorable about the very commas. Massingham never relaxed while the paper was being shaped. He could see a minor fault through a month's back numbers, and grieve over it. I have some conscience myself in these matters, but I loathed it at that time, especially in an editor. I thought they were of no consequence. Massingham thought they were. He would have been found recorrecting proofs if the heavens had fallen, and, being shortsighted he would have thrust the almost illegible documents at the announcing angel, unaware, in his tension, that it was the last day. No young poet ever searched his trial efforts for what possibly might be of dubious import more closely than my new editor scrutinized the evidence and arguments of his paper, and the form in which they were to be presented. . . . And what a possession for lucky proprietors! To say they owned the *Nation* as the King might say he had won the Derby, or an American millionaire the finest collection of Chinese porcelain in the world! . . . There was not in the world, I used to imagine fondly, another review of quite the distinction and quality of the *Nation*; and certainly there was not one to equal it in its power to raise both furious enmity and grateful approval.'

And so on. I have no space here to dilate upon his actual work and upon his exquisite style. I have written this

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article mainly by way of an affectionate memorial—albeit belated. I got much from him: it is only right that I should do something to repay, however inadequately, those manifold services. May his name shine for ever as a sort of beacon-light to guide the footsteps of aspiring journalists!

Who is the Sinner?

(*A Story*)

(Translated from the 'ANANDA VIKATAN'—*Tamil*—By
SRIMATHI K. SAVITRI AMMAL)

Since the cruel waters had snatched away her man, strong and in the prime of his life, Murugayi preferred to remain single. She couldn't think of living with another. For was there any other in the world to equal her Irula? 'Here, get me the ashes (sacred) Murugayi,' he would call to her before going out; who would say so and be all that to her now? And indeed, how could she forget him who never failed to take her to a fair or festival anywhere within fifty miles? Poor woman!

Irula had tremendous faith in the Lord Kailasnath, the presiding deity of the village temple. For a long time he had been childless. He worshipped and made many devout sacrifices to the innumerable gods of his clan. But all in vain. He then prayed and vowed to offer two wooden bars of his own making, to Kailasnath, and lo! within a year Murugayi was the mother of a fine boy.

From the day the child was born Irula was a changed man. He gave up drinking, never touched fish, beef or anything. He was content with the gruel and the plain meal Murugayi cooked for him. His master too felt kindly towards him on account of his simple honest ways. Thus all was well and happy with Irula and Murugayi.

'What if we be low in caste? We are none the less the children of God. If we be honest He would serve us well,' he preached, and to hear him say it, the rest of the people in the 'cheri' blessed him and called him the 'saint.'

One day Irula was sitting with his boy on the bank of the river, teaching him nursery rhymes. Suddenly there arose a

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hue and cry further up the bank that a Brahmin girl had fallen into the river by accident. On hearing this, Irula ran over to that place, and seeing none of the higher caste made for the rescue of the drowning girl, threw in himself after her. But he never came back again.

Murugayi was down with unutterable grief. She could never recover from that blow. One thing, however, cheered up a bit her broken heart. It was the sight of her darling Vela. In his face she forgot something of the keenness of her anguish. But even this perhaps was too much for the gods. For Vela was ill—very ill for the past three days, and the mother, foodless and with streaming face, sat by his side.

* * *

It was a black night. A few stars shone in the sky, as if in contempt at the inferiority of the world below. All was silence in the 'cheri.' Not a leaf stirred. The frogs lay in wait for the glow-worms while the snakes pursued the chase after their prey.

Inside the hut of Irula the 'saint' a small earthen lamp was burning. Murugayi who had lain down a bit in sheer fatigue awoke all of a sudden, ran out and looked up and around her a little excitedly. Then she went in and with fervour applied the sacred ashes on the face and hands of the sick child.

During the brief while she slept, Murugayi dreamt a very vivid dream. After four years Irula came to see her for the first time. He told her to look after Vela carefully. No treatment was necessary, he said, and added if their boy was to live she should take him to the temple and prostrate him near the *Balipeetam* of Kailasnath and do the simple worship of burning camphor in the sacred Presence. He then stepped over the child in order that his demand may be rendered solemn.

At this Murugayi awoke. She was at a loss to think what she should do. 'God, temple,' all belonged to those of the higher caste. They—the untouchables—could never dream of getting near the temple within short of a furlong's distance.

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And any one who dared beyond the limits did so at the peril of being tied to the tree and flayed alive in front of the house of the big *Mirasdar* of the village. But, had not Irula come after these four years on purpose to acquaint her with his wish? What if they took off her skin? Nothing mattered if only darling Vela could live! 'What'll become of me if he dies and me not doing anything to save him!' she thought wildly, and at last came to a conclusion.

It was about eight O'clock next morning. The priest, coming out of the temple for the purpose of spitting out the tobacco juice in his mouth, saw a *Panchama* woman with a child clasped in her arms within ten yards of the doorsteps. Lord! how the sight struck him! The worthy man got into a violent rage and poured forth the vilest abuse he could find in the sacred hearing of Kailasnath. 'That man' they call Gandhi,' he cried in angry tones, 'has been responsible for such audacity. I have got to wash myself now. Here, Muthumari, go and inform the big *Pannai*.' He gave the order and went inside. The sanctity of the temple was profaned! His mind was busy with thoughts of the purification ceremony, his own share in the income, and other things.

Soon there gathered a large crowd in front of the temple. Murugayi was sitting with the child on her lap. She was confident there was justice in her cause. But the whip was brought with all dispatch, and there stood the big *Pannai* ready to give the order. Murugayi went through her sorrows, the vivid dream she dreamt, and all in a way that would melt the very stones to pity. She begged: she implored.

'The hussy has gone mad,' bawled the big *Pannai*. 'She simply raves. Ramu, close the door: else she will get inside. Go, bring four men from the *cheri*.'

A dog had been discovered inside the temple. It was driven out and the door was shut. A man from the crowd set the animal against Murugayi and another picked up a stone and flung it at her.

'Is the wretched *Pariah* woman even lower than the

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dog? You may kill me; I don't mind. But save the life of my child,' she sobbed.

Meanwhile the 'cheri' men had come and she would be forcibly led from that place to receive her punishment. At that moment the child gave one piercing shriek '*Amma!*'

'God! they are killing my child, my Vela!' screamed the frantic woman. The little body shook convulsively twice, and then all was still.

The mother placed her hand on the forehead of the child. There came a sudden change over her. Her tears had ceased, and she stood up with fierce, flashing eyes. They shot out real sparks of fire. Like Mariamman she flared up, an image of fury.

'Close your temple now. Lock your god up and keep watch over him as you please. I don't want him anymore. I'll follow my Vela,' she cried and ran away throwing the corpse down. A dead silence fell on the crowd. The extremity of sorrow softens the hardness of man. But, pride, conceit and other evils take possession of him again.

The dead body was taken away by the 'cheri' men. The whole 'cheri' mourned the death of the child. The question as to who was responsible for it was being asked secretly in the Brahmin quarters. A search was made for Murugayi. But nowhere could she be found. It was concluded she was very likely gone to the other world to plead her cause before God. Indeed! Who was the miserable sinner who bore the burden of Murugayi's wrongs?

The Fallen Angel

(A Poem)

By BUDDHADEV BASU

(Rendered from *Bengali* by Samar Sen)

The Sea of Youth with its foaming surges
lies before me,
the sands beside it far stretching,
and glittering like particles of burnt gold.

The radiant sky is above me,
and the sun with its first blush
has tinged the nigh forest.

That blush is but the flame of desire,—
the slow unfolding of a virgin dream,
written across the sky in letters of glowing passion.
Before me lies the sea of Youth,
and I behold it with a lonely heart.

The Sea groans with pain intolerable.
Millions of hungry lips outstretching
towards the sky
try to obliterate in darkness
the new-born radiance,—
to make helpless in sudden flood
the wayfarers on the earth's pilgrimage.

The convulsed waves leave foam behind them ;
they hiss with venom in hopeless wrath.

The black, deep, dark waters
give rise to numberless evils within their secret womb ;
the winds blow wild across my heart's temple,
and put out the candle-light of worship there.

In the garden silently withers away
the pure, white flower.

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I am a nightmare,—
cruel and dry and ferocious,
and my throne is in the dark.
With boundless shame the Beautiful
goes away from me,
seeing the doors all closed
and the dark temple yard;
I can feel him passing away
in the distant smell of spent flowers,
and Misery cries everywhere in emptiness.
Alas, my youth ! it is a curse to me !

Yet there are rare moments,
when upon the surging waves descends
a soft and quiet and beautiful light.
In such moments the sky is cut
by the prism of time
into millions of coloured rays,—
and the Golden Lotus blooms,
and all the world is breathless for a while.
Stricken with wonder,
I perceive its fragrance to be a Revelation.
The wonder and the beauty of that Revelation,
which whispers, whispers—
'Thou art not a cruel beast, nor an insect
which counts for nothing :
Thou art the Fallen Angel !'

The Fallen Angel !!
...And suddenly I understand
why my eyes like two imprisoned birds
seek after the wide, blue depths of the heavens ;—
and why the winds murmur love in the forest,
and with their magic touch me into peace.
...I am the Fallen Angel !—
And the sun shines, the dews drop,
and bare branches put flowers forth in ecstasy,

THE FALLEN ANGEL

tossed softly by winds from the south.
The moon burns inextinguishably beautiful,
and in shining stars darkness doth weep.

Silent I remain.

And in silence,

my sorrows like festive candles I dedicate
to the altar of the Temple of Joy.

In the divine palace of my body
I open the Senses like windows
into the endless stream of light.

How many days have passed by
since the golden dawn,
when once a frail Youth with a frail heart
started upon his life's journey,—
alone, weak, utterly helpless !

Long, long days have gone by,
and now I am weary,
while the wind blows around me
the scent of spent flowers.

Now I recall the times

when she used to come out in the fragrance-laden
twilight,
and whispered words of love ;—
when, at her touch,
lightnings of joy would suddenly pierce
the darkness of my heartache.

And beauty

flashed in the blue depths of her eyes
the image of my true self,—
and the great realisation came, aching, throbbing,
in moments and hours and days :

I am as pure and white and bright
as the stainless Sun !

Ah ! when my Beloved spoke,
her mortal words were transformed into eternal significance,

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and the winds blew them into my heart,
touching it with aching sorrow,—
and whispered, whispered—
'Thou art the Fallen Angel !'

And now I remain' silent and think :
Across this bed of mud
 there must be somewhere a place for me
 in the heart of the White Lotus.

I am the hymn of Dawn,
 the breath of night, and the scent of purest
 flowers :

I am sacred in myriads of invisible shapes,
 and laugh at the mean and base things of the
 world.

All the pains and miseries, the tears and heartaches
 break forth in me in passionate songs :

And in glimmering twilight,
I am the High Priest at the altar
 where Darkness meets Light in love :
I am the Fallen Angel !

'Seek Ultimate Values'

By K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO¹

I am grateful to the Reception Committee for inviting me to preside over this session of the Andhra Students' Conference. I have great hesitation in occupying the place meant for my chief, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. But for the uncertainty regarding the duration of the meetings of the Working Committee of the Congress at Patna, you should have welcomed a President older, wiser, and incomparably more brilliant than myself. Even as it is, I have no manner of doubt that this honour has come to me, not in my individual capacity but as the present head of a great national institution, the Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala, founded by Kopalle Hanumantha Rao, the noblest Andhra of his generation. You have indeed gone out of your way in choosing one who is not officially connected with the Andhra University or any of its affiliated colleges. But I am Editor of *Triveni* as well as Principal of the Kalasala; and as your eminent Vice-Chancellor is a member of the Advisory Board of *Triveni*, I might claim, in a playful mood, that the entire University is but a part of *Triveni*. My young friends! Though I am not old enough to utter words of profound wisdom garnered from the experience of many decades, I am near enough to you in age to appreciate your point of view and to share, in some measure, your glowing idealism.

* * *

On this and the succeeding days you will discuss several problems affecting your lives as students and as citizens. You belong to one of the youngest Universities in India. Having successfully overcome the initial obstacles and emerging from the dust of many heated controversies, it is well on

¹ Presidential Address delivered at the thirteenth Andhra Students' Conference, Vizianagaram, on 14th December 1934.

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its way to splendid achievement. With the poet-prince of Jeypore as its foremost patron, and a thinker of international reputation as its Vice-Chancellor, it may confidently look forward to a great future. But mine is not the Convocation Address for the year, and I shall therefore pass on to questions which relate not so much to the University, but which vitally concern your outlook as young men and women.

In an age of changing values, of the conflict of cultures and the clash of ideals, the youth of every land must develop a power of initiative and arrive at that synthesis which will resolve those conflicts and harmonise those ideals. The very immensity of the problems must call forth into active play the latent powers of youth, sharpen their intellect, and enrich their emotions. India, even more than the rest of the post-war world, is at the cross-roads. Here and now she has the opportunity offered her of facing and solving the problems of man and the machine, the individual and the state, nationalism and internationalism, realism and idealism, classicism and romanticism. And if the youth of India can summon up enough of the spirit of intellectual adventure, they will receive the gift of far-seeing vision, and their contribution to the thought of the world will be as notable as that of the ancient Rishis. For, believe me, the age of the Rishis is not merely in the far-off past. In our day India has given birth to seers of the type of Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, and J. Krishnamurti. Some of these might seem to be at cross-purposes with the rest, but ultimately their message is one,—unflinching devotion to truth, and unerring pursuit of the vision splendid. You may study the many facets of the truth as glimpsed by these seers of modern India, and bring to bear upon that study your own awakened powers of intellect and intuition. You can neither refuse to perform this duty nor seek to evade it. If you do either, you do so at your peril. As the great Kannada poet and scholar, Sriman Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, puts it, India is in the position of Yudhishtira and his brothers.

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Each of them was required by the unseen *Yaksha* to answer certain questions before being permitted to quench his thirst. All but Yudhishtira evaded this duty and were condemned to death. India today must like Yudhishtira answer the questions propounded by the Time-Spirit, for then only may she drink of the waters of Life.

In this task, the spectre of arid utilitarianism that is now stalking the land is our worst enemy. To look merely at the surface of things and not seek to pierce behind the veil of form; to test every new idea from the point of view of immediate practicability and not that of ultimate value; to judge men and matters as if objective success and not inward growth were the highest good; is indicative of a narrow vision and can but lead to a very low type of achievement. It is because of this predominance of the merely utilitarian point of view that our lives are becoming cramped and mechanised, devoid of the spaciousness and beauty that lend a meaning to life.

Another unfortunate feature of our severed existence is the fear of sentiment. From our earliest years we are taught to be careful and circumspect, to take no risks, to be guided at home and abroad by authority even in the smallest details of everyday life. Any slight variation from the standard, any exhibition of special aptitudes is looked upon with suspicion. Children who are dreamy, and more than usually affectionate, are deemed unfit for the rough and tumble of life. Every effort is made to get them to conform to the established standard. The poet, the actor, the musician, and the painter in every child must be crushed out, so that there may be no impediment to its becoming an efficient lawyer or business man. It is forgotten that all sentiment is not necessarily mawkish sentimentality, and that the love which ennobles and uplifts is a divine gift that ought to be treasured. Some day, indeed, this intense affection for father, mother, or playmate may be transfigured into the love of all living beings. When the prince Siddhartha chose Yasodhara from amongst all the Sakya maidens, and lavished all the love of a noble nature on

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her, he was inevitably preparing for the great destiny, in fulfilment of which he flooded the entire universe with his beneficence and grace. Nothing great is ever achieved by an overcareful calculation of chances. It is but a peurile philosophy which fails to take note of the value of sentiment and of the adventure that flows from sentiment. And though equanimity of spirit and equi-vision are valuable, let us realise that they are the results of the rich and varied experience of youth. They will not come to those that fail to face the battle of life. If, while young, you are not great enough to dare, you will achieve not equanimity of spirit but spiritual inertia.

In a country that is being rapidly flooded by cheap machine-made goods, ugly and unesthetic, there is urgent need for a gospel of beauty. In our dress, our household utensils and the many articles of daily use, in the music we hear and the plays we witness, in our shrieking advertisements and wall-posters, we have to fight the cult of ugliness. When you look at a water-colour by Nandalal Bose, or a khadi muslin from Chicacole, or a carpet from the Jatheeya Kala-sala, you will find that every one of these possesses a quality that transcends all limitations of time and space and monetary value, for you are drinking in the essence of the creative gift of the craftsman or the painter. In some mysterious way they draw us nearer to God, the supreme artist. Everytime you purchase anything, ask yourself not merely whether it is useful, but whether in addition it is beautiful. Aim not at mere efficiency, but at efficiency that is informed by culture. One of the main objects of your conference is the organisation of work in villages. Bring back to the village the beauty of simple yet harmonious surroundings, of dance and music, of the arts of the builder and the painter, and of the thousand and one crafts that are India's precious heritage through many millennia. The work that is being carried on by the Poet at Santiniketan and Sriniketan is the prelude to that now inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. The seven lakhs of villages in the land must hum once again with life, with the

'SEEK ULTIMATE VALUES'

joy of self-expression and of human endeavour for the ennobling of human life.

I have noticed with pleasure, during the past few years, an increasing interest in the study of Telugu literature. Very many of you, young men and women, are seeking to express your inmost soul through verse, song or story. Part of this work may be ephemeral or defective in form, but you, young friends, are carrying forward in the present age the great mission of enriching the literature of Andhra and making it an expression of the highest thought and feeling of the race. I belong to the generation of Rayaprolu Subbarao, Abburi Ramakrishna Rao, Basavaraju Apparao, D. V. Krishna Sastri, Pingali Lakshmkantam, Katuri Venkateswara Rao, Viswanatha Satyanarayana, Chinta Dikshitulu, Sivasankara Sastri, Nayani Subbarao, Nanduri Subbarao, and Adivi Bapiraju. I am neither a poet nor a painter, but I claim kinship with all of them. I am not so sure, however, that they will admit any kinship with me. I have been on fairly intimate terms with them, and I have had the privilege of listening to them while they recited their poems or songs. Andhra Desa ought to be proud of them, for by their achievement they have won for Telugu literature an abiding place in the literature of All-India. You belong to the next generation; you have sat at their feet, some literally, others in the spirit. I am therefore longing to hear some of you recite at this conference choice poems and songs of your creation. Thus shall we link the generations, one with another, and establish a fellowship of the elect. As a lover of Andhra culture, I am thankful to the University for instituting an Honours course in Telugu language and literature, and for placing at its head one who is not merely a scholar but a poet of distinction. I refer to Mr. Lakshmkantam. I do hope that very soon an effort will be made to impart instruction in the highest classes through the medium of Telugu, and also to open a section of fine arts.

I have spoken at such length about idealism, art, and poetry that you must be wondering whether I have any ready-

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made solution for the problem of problems, that of the educated unemployed. Government service, the so-called learned professions, industry and commerce, can absorb but a fraction of the graduates turned out year after year by the Universities. You will ere long find that learning and scholarship are not the passports to lucrative employment which they once were. The State or the University can do but little. Fresh avenues of employment like the Army, the Navy, and the Diplomatic and Consular services can be thrown open to us only after the establishment of Swaraj. I do not know if it is fair to expect highly educated young men and women in search of wealth and distinction to settle down in villages, curtail their personal wants, and help to build up the New India of the future. But this is all that a nation, yet unfree, can offer. And why should this cause disappointment? Learning is certainly its own reward; other rewards are incidental. To those that have a burning faith in a return to the life of the village, rendered purposeful by the urge of service, this counsel will not appear fatuous. In the All India Spinners Association and the All India Village Industries Association, you have the nucleus of a mighty organisation which will spread a network of village societies all over the land. You can take your share of this glorious work.

Here I must utter a word of warning. Do not attach much importance to the current notions of success and failure. I claim that I am a close student of the philosophy of failure; and I wish to repeat what I said some years ago when *Triveni* passed through a crisis in its career: 'Success consists in unceasing pursuit of the Path; and the only failure that the idealist recognises is the failure to stand by Truth.' Let me close on that note.

This is not Life

This is not Life, but something worse than Death
That I in your dear thoughts no more am bound,
That I were better buried underground
In some lone place where green grass hearkeneth
To desolated Love with bated breath :
For then, perhaps, at last, some peace were found
For lost love resting 'neath that green-grass mound
Deaf to the taunts Remembrance whispereth.

Death is no agony but softest sleep
Of non-remembrance without any dream
Which on the tired soul doth gently creep :
But ah ! what bitter torture would it be
For each man dead, to wake in death and see
How dead he is, how dear though he did seem !

SANKARA KRISHNA CHETTUR

Reviews

[*We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French, and German. Books for review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.*]

A Pageant of Asia: A Study of Three Civilizations, By Kenneth Saunders, Litt. D. (Cambridge). (Price 21sh. Oxford University Press.)

If the Orient is being dominated by western methods and inventions, in return the Occident is slowly being permeated by the subtle influences of the East. The attention drawn to the literature of India by Sir William Jones, in the time of the East India Company, has resulted in opening the doors of the East so that something of its light has poured westwards. It was with a brilliant intuition that Schopenhauer, eighty years ago, prophesied that the teachings of the Upanishads would permeate all western philosophic thought, just as the teachings of the Christ permeated and finally substituted the teachings of Greece and Rome.

For the last sixty years, one of the greatest influences in this work has been the Theosophical Society, which drew the attention of the cultured of Europe and America to the message of Hinduism and Buddhism. This work received a dramatic setting at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, when Swami Vivekananda in his picturesque robes and with virile eloquence explained the teachings of the Vedanta. Steadily an interest has been aroused in all things of India, and not only among the cultured but also to some extent among the uncultured. The United States, and now South America, are being flooded with literature on 'Yoga.' These modern revelations on Yoga are always aimed at the western temperament, which is desirous of seeing results in terms of dollars and cents. It is, however, characteristic of the misunderstanding of certain aspects of the East that the word 'fakir' is used in America (pronounced 'faker') to mean a fraud and humbug.

In a more restricted way, but not the less subtle, has been the interest among a few in the West in the subtle

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teachings of China and Japan. These countries have had objects of Art of a size which could be transported to the West, in a way that has scarcely been possible except with a few of the great Art creations of India. The military growth of Japan has of course been one element in drawing attention to the Far East, but also not the less has been the spectacle of the 400 millions of China slowly organising themselves to be a nation on the western model, with armies, navies, and aircraft.

This being the general situation in the cultural world as between the West and the East, many writers have taken up the vast task of explaining the East to the West. Numerous are today the manuals on Eastern religions and philosophy. But it is rarely that an author of such fine attainments as Dr. Saunders takes up the work. He has dwelt in India, China and Japan, to inform himself directly of their cultures, and evidently he knows both Chinese and Japanese, though not seemingly Sanskrit. His work is a volume of 452 pages, and is divided into three Sections: (1) India; (2) China; (3) Japan. His aim is to make as complete a cultural survey as possible of these three Sections of the Orient, and to explain their significance to European readers. The book is beautifully illustrated with some of the finest specimens of art productions of these countries. At the end of each Section Dr. Saunders prints extracts from typical writers so as to give a general idea of the culture of the age which he has described.

In each Section the author surveys rapidly epoch by epoch the various changes which took place in the field of religious thought and artistic creation. His book, therefore, is in many ways a miniature encyclopaedia of these particular subjects. But it is just because of that the general reader will probably find a certain difficulty in not being able to 'see the wood for the trees.' If the book were not quite so full of detail, perhaps one would not be so dazzled by the numbers of embodiments of religious and artistic thought presented to the gaze of the reader.

To a reader in India, there is naturally little that is new in the Section on India. If anything, this is the least satisfactory part of the book. Dr. Saunders has a deep admiration for the gospel of Buddhism, but on the whole he has not been able to penetrate to the inner spirit of Hinduism, either as represented in the Upanishads or in the various cults which

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embody Hinduism to the popular mind. But the Sections on China and Japan are full of penetration and bring those two countries very near to one's imagination.

This work is a very valuable one, and should be in every representative library. It is particularly useful for students, and indeed it gives the impression that it has been specially prepared for them according to the regular methods well known to American University Courses. The book has such a brilliant thesis and is so full of fascinating material that one wishes that Dr. Saunders would write another smaller, and eliminate the details concerning the developments of religion, art and philosophy which are useful to the student but are apt to confuse the general reader.

Were one inclined, or had the space necessary, one could fill pages with quotations from the book, with brilliant extracts from ancient writers which Dr. Saunders has gathered together, and with his comments upon them.

C. JINARAJADASA

Tiruparuttikunram and its Temples.—By T. N. Rama chandran, M.A. (Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum. Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras. Price Rs. 11-4 as.)

In this fine volume, handsomely printed and profusely illustrated, the author makes an exhaustive study of the temples at Tiruparuttikunram, identified with the ancient Jina-Kanchi, adjoining Conjeveram. The work indeed is much more than what its title promises, for, besides being a study of the temples from the standpoints of archaeology and art, it forms a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Jaina cosmology, iconography, mythology, hagiology etc. Thus not only scholars but all interested in India's past, and not least the members of the great Jaina community, to many of whom even the names of these monuments of their religion must be but little known, owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Ramachandran for this work. The monograph bears abundant evidence of patient research and painstaking labour. The descriptions of the temples with which the author is more immediately concerned are so thorough that they could scarcely be improved upon, and it would be but just praise to say that a more complete or better account of these venerable

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temples, which go back to Pallava and Chola times, could not have been produced. Of very great interest are the lucid descriptions of the numerous fresco paintings which though but seldom of high artistic quality nevertheless merit detailed study and are moreover of great iconographic importance. We would commend especially to students of art history Plate XXII, No. 58, a dance scene, as one comparable with the highest achievements of the painters of Rajputana and of old Bengal.

We congratulate Dr. Gravely, the Superintendent of the Government Museum, Madras, on the high standard of research and scholarship which we have come to associate with the Bulletins of the Madras Museum, produced under his able editorship, and specially on the addition to the series of this fine piece of work by Mr. Ramachandran.

AJIT GUOSE

The Origin and Development of Religion in Vedic Literature.—By P. S. Deshmukh, M.A., D. Phil. (Oxford University Press, 1934. pp. xvi, 378. Rs. 15.)

We cordially welcome this interesting book of Dr. Deshmukh on the origin and development of religion in Vedic literature. This book represents the thesis prepared by him for the degree of D. Phil. of the Oxford University under the able guidance of the late Professor Macdonell and this is sufficient to vouch for its accuracy and precision. In the first of the four parts into which the work is divided, we find various definitions of religion set forth and discussed. The author refers to the definitions of Herder, D'Alviella, Durkheim, Marret, Jevons, Max Muller, Tylor, Frazer, Jastrow, Menzies, Tiele, Jordan, Ladd, Galloway, Hopkins, Macdonell, Pratt, etc. The author then formulates his own definitions of religion—that it is a social institution with some principles enjoining certain beliefs, and maintaining certain rules of conduct based on such principles. The belief is with reference to the existence of some power or powers beyond and a sense of dependence on them. An approach to the connotation of the word *religion* may be made in the word *dharma*.

Several theories have been put forward regarding the origin of religion. The most noteworthy of such theories are—Fetishism of Brosses, Animism of Tylor, Ancestor worship of Spenser, Totemism of Jevons, and Magic theory of

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Frazer. The relation of some of these theories to the Indo-Europeans and Indo-Iranians and their religion is the subject of the next part. The author states in unambiguous language that, so far as Indo-Europeans are concerned, magic did not exist before the evolution of religion and at no stage did magic influence Indo-European religion. He also states clearly that the prayers that are found in the Rig Veda are not derived from charms of any type and that the priests were never magicians.

Through a process of philosophical induction the author arrives at the conclusion that belief in God, His worship, His qualities, etc., did exist in the Indo-European period. The Indo-Europeans were influenced by supernatural phenomena to a large extent, believed in them as beneficent to humanity and began to worship and propitiate them. This propitiation and worship assumed huge proportions when the Indian branch separated from the common Indo-European group, and the result was the hymns of the Rig Veda. Magic in its full-fledged form developed only later and this is represented on Indian soil by the Atharva Veda.

Regarding the original home of the Indo-Europeans the author, after referring to the theories of various scholars, regards parts of Europe and parts of Asia as the original home. It is more probable that the Indo-Europeans were autochthonous in the region extending from the Punjab to Persia, for in this region alone is found the earliest of the available remnants of Indo-European culture.

Dealing next with the religion of the Indo-Europeans, the author, mainly through the aid of the science of philology, infers the existence of Indo-European Gods like *Dyaus* (Skt. *Dyāus-pītar*), *Varuna*, Mother Earth, God of Thunder, Sun, Moon, Dawn, Stars, Day and Night, *Aśvins*, Fire, Wind, etc., and makes elaborate comments on them. Almost all the items of the religious beliefs of the Indian today go back to the Indo-European period. Ancestor worship, fetish worship etc., are all traced to the Indo-European period.

In dealing with the Indo-Iranian religion the author, as is natural, has to rely on a comparison between the Rig Veda and the Avesta. The Rig Veda is undoubtedly the older of the two, and a comparison of the two reveals clearly the state of Indo-Iranian religion. Ahura Mazda, Hvar, Mithra, Baga, Apam Napat, Ariyaman, Veretragna, Haoma, Thrita,

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Vivanhvant, Yima, etc., are some of the Indo-Iranian Divinities worthy of note and all of them have their parallels in the older Vedic pantheon.

In the part dealing with Vedic religion we find the author referring to the period to which Vedic literature is usually attributed by Orientalists like Max Muller, Macdonell, Keith etc. (1500 B. C.—1000 B. C.) He does not commit himself to any view, but seems inclined to fall in with the European Orientalists and reject the views of Tilak and Jacobi, who base their data on astronomical calculations (4000 B. C.). Arguing on similar lines the late Mr. B. V. Kamesvara Aiyar has demonstrated that the Satapatha Brahmana should have been composed about 2800 B. C., and his arguments have not been given the publicity they deserve. The Boghaz-koi inscription certainly takes back the date of Vedic literature to a period long anterior to that assigned by Keith or Macdonell or Max Muller.

The civilisation as embodied in the Rig Veda is set forth in detail. The Vedic Gods and the place held by each in the Vedic pantheon are well set forth under the heads—Vedic Gods, Atmospheric Gods, Terrestrial Gods, and other Gods. The work is on the whole a valuable contribution to the study of Vedic religion and culture and we heartily congratulate the author on his excellent thesis.

T. R. CHINTAMANI, M.A., Ph.D.

Vijayanagara—Origin of the City and the Empire.—By N. Venkata Ramanayya, M.A., Ph.D. (Published by the University of Madras : Price Rs. 2 or 3 sh).

The book under review forms a brilliant addition to the recent literature on Vijayanagara. The author has dived deep into the vexed problem of the origin of the City and of the Empire of Vijayanagara and the results of his research are now embodied in the present volume.

Scholars are divided in their opinion regarding the origin of Vijayanagara, some holding it to be of Telugu origin, while others contend in favour of a Canarese origin. Veteran scholars like Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar have long been contending that the city of Vijayanagara was founded by the Hoysala ruler Ballala III, and the Kingdom of Vijayanagara by the five brothers, Hari Hara I, Bukka I, Kampa, Marapa

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and Muddapa, who were originally in the service of the Hoysala king mentioned above. They state that he employed them to defend his northern frontier and to stem the new flood of the Bahamani invasions.

This theory has gained fresh support by the publication of 'Beginnings of Vijayanagara History' by the Rev. Father Heras. He goes a step further than his predecessors. He states that 'Hari Hara I was enthroned at Vijayanagara by the old Hoysala monarch (Ballala III), as his own Mahamandaleswara in the north,' and that 'Kampa was placed in that responsible post (in the government of the fortified hill of Udayagiri in the Nellore district) by the same Vira Ballala (III).'

Though there were some scholars who opposed this theory, no systematic study of the problem was made to stress their point of view and to prove the truth of their contention that Vijayanagara was of Telugu origin, until the publication of 'Kampili and Vijayanagara,' some years back, by the author of the work under review, which provoked much criticism in the press. The present work is the outcome of a further and more serious study of the same problem. In this, the author has successfully met all the criticisms levelled against the theory of the Telugu origin of Vijayanagara and has brought home the truth of his contention.

The supporters of the Canarese origin of Vijayanagara mainly take their stand on the statement of Ferishta, namely 'Bilal Dew built a strong city upon the frontiers of his dominions and called it after his son Beeja, to which the word *nuggur* or city was added, so that it is now known by the name of Beejanuggur.' To identify 'Beejanuggur' mentioned in the aforesaid statement, with Vijayanagara the capital of Harihara I and Bukka, and to confirm their identification, they press into service the fact, known from inscriptions, of Bukka's rule from Hosapattana (new city) in the Hoysala Nadu or country and the existence of a Hoysala inscription at Hampi (Vijayanagara). Thus they postulate that (1) 'Beejanuggur,' said to have been built by 'Bilal Dew' according to Ferishta is no other than Vijayanagara on the Tungabhadra, the seat of a mighty empire, (2) Hosapattana (new city) is the same as Vijayanagara, or in other words, Vijayanagara was also known as Hosapattana, because it was newly built by Ballala (III), (3) the founders of the Vijayanagara Empire—the five brothers—were employed by Ballala

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III to defend his northern frontier to stem the tide of the Bahamani invasions. Hence, they contend that Vijayanagara was of Canarese origin.

The author of the present volume has effectively replied to all these contentions. First, he proves to the hilt, with the aid of epigraphical evidence, that the territory of Ballala III never extended to the Bellary district and that the Hoysalas lost their hold on that district long before the accession to the throne of Ballala III, even during the rule of his grandfather, Someswara (A.D. 1233—1292). Hence the contention that Ballala III built the city of Vijayanagara can no longer be upheld. The author admits the existence of a Hoysala inscription at Hampi and Bukka's rule from Hosapattana; but he points out that the inscription at Hampi belongs to Someswara but not to Ballala III. In the light of the aforesaid facts, the identification of Hosapattana with Vijayanagara and the theories built up on the strength of that identification fall to the ground. It does not require much thought to refute the argument regarding the employment of the five brothers by Ballala III to defend his northern frontier and stem the tide of the Bahamani invasion, for Ballala III died in A. D. 1342; the Bahamani kingdom came into existence only in 1347, five years after the death of Ballala III. Even the rebellion of Krishna Naik, in connection with which 'Bilal Dew' was said to have built the city of 'Beejanuggur,' was dated 1344 by Ferishta himself. Thus, it appears ludicrous to state that the five brothers were employed by Ballala III to defend his northern frontier and stem the tide of Bahamani invasions.

Besides fully refuting all the points advanced in support of the theory of the Canarese origin, the author adduces some more evidence—internal, from inscriptions—in support of his theory. He compares the administrative system of the early Vijayanagara Kings with that of the Kakatiyas of Warangal and shows that some features were common to both systems. The administrative divisions of 'Sthala,' 'Rajya' and 'Nayankara' that were in vogue in the Vijayanagara Kingdom are not at all met with either in the Seuna or Hoysala Kingdoms. Besides this, the crest of the Vijayanagara Kings is more or less akin to that of the Kakatiyas. Thus it is shown that the founders of Vijayanagara were either directly or indirectly connected with the Telugu Kings of the Kakatiya dynasty of Warangal and that Vijayanagara was of Telugu origin.

The author determines the extent and boundaries of the

Hoysala Desa. He proves by tables that it denotes 'a tract of country well within the boundaries of the present Mysore state' and identifies Hosapattana with a village of the same name, situated 'on an island in the Hemavati river in the Krishnarajapeta taluka of the Mysore district.'

The book is divided into two parts; the first deals with the origin of the City and the other part with the origin of the Empire. While trying to show that the Kingdom of Ballala III never extended into the Bellary district, the author takes the opportunity to give a more or less exhaustive account of his military campaigns, which cover the period of his whole reign, besides reviewing minutely the relations between the Hoysalas and the Seunas of Devagiri from the time of Ballala II. In the same way, in the chapter on the early Vijayanagara Kings and the Telugu country, the author reviews the political condition of the Telugu country, after the fall of the Kakatiyas of Warangal. Thus we get a cursory history of the Kingdoms of Warangal, Rachakonda and Kondavidu for the first time in English.

The five appendices at the end of the book enhance its value. Specially noteworthy is the note on Doravadi. It is particularly interesting for more than one reason. It was the place of residence of Mummadis Singayayanayaka. Besides that, Hampi is known from inscriptions to have been included in Doravadi-nadu. The author's successful location of both Doravadi and Doravadi-nadu, deals a death blow to the identification of Hosapattana with Vijayanagara, more or less the backbone of the theory of the Canarese origin.

Thus the whole book bears the impress of the author's extensive and laborious study and is of immense interest.

Some points in the book require further consideration. These may be stated here. (1) C.P. No. 5 of 1919 - 20 and the existence of Vema's inscriptions at Tripurantakam lead us to believe that the Srisaila country was under Vemareddi at first but not under Hari Hara, as stated on page 94: (2) Unless and until some fresh evidence is adduced, Barni's statement, that Harihara was first a follower of Islam (P. 96), cannot be accepted as gospel truth. (3) Caution is needed when it is said that Gengu Salar of Kalubarga, who burnt the 'gopura' of Belur was a son of Bukka I--the ardent disciple of Vidyaranya and the protector of the four castes; (4) There is no reliable evidence to show that Vinukonda was the first

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capital of Vema (P. 124); (5) the authorities cited for the statement that Vinukonda-sima passed into the hands of Bukka I some time before 1352 are V. R. III, K1 56 and 58 i.e., List of Ins. Ced. Dts, which is not an authoritative work. There are many inaccuracies in this list. The date given, in the inscription cited from that list, is Saka 1274, Paridhavi. The cyclic year Paridhavi tallies with 1294 Saka but not with 1274. Hence it can be contended that Vinukonda-sima was under Vema, till some time after 1352 A.D. (6) The identification of the author that Bukkaraya Vodayalu of the Gozalavidu inscription (N. D. 1., II Kg., 7) of A. D. 1314 is the same as Bukka, the grandfather of Harihara I, cannot be conclusively accepted, until that inscription is clearly edited. (7) In our opinion, the damaged inscription (N.D. 1., II, Kr. 28), cited by the author to show that Prataparudra II lived until 1330 A.D., does not really belong to that king, inasmuch as the phrases 'Karnatakabavadiswa aripratapa Sri Virapratapa' occur therein. In no inscription of Prataparudra, as far as we have perused, are these terms found. 'Karnatakabavadiswa aripratapa' must be a misreading. Perhaps it should be 'Karnatakubarigiswara pratapa,' which was a title of the Gajapatis of Orissa. Hence it may be one of their inscriptions. (8) The statement that Anapota captured Warangal, Bhuvanagiri and Singapura from Kapaya Nayaka sometime before 1369 A.D. requires further elucidation in view of the statement made by the Muhammadan historians that Allauddin Hasan Bahaman Shah wrested Bhuvanagiri from Kapaya Nayaka, some time before his (Sultan's) death in 1358. (9) A.D. 1360 is not the latest date of Kapaya Nayaka, the king of Warangal (as stated in the table on page 174) but that of Koppula Kapaya Nayaka.

The above points in no way diminish the value of the work under review. We gladly recommend the book to everyone interested in the history of Vijayanagara.

M. SOMASEKHARA SARMA

Recent Essays and Writings--By Jawaharlal Nehru (The Kitabistan, Allahabad, Price Re. 1-8-0).

'I am not a politician by choice; forces stronger than me have driven me to this field, and it may be that I have yet to learn the ways of politicians,' says Jawaharlal Nehru in one of these papers. Nor is the Pandit a writer by choice;

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it may be also that he has yet to learn the ways of writers ; but forces stronger than him must have moved him to write with such cold and passionless brilliance. The Pandit is well-known as the prophet of Indian youth, but it is rare to come upon a prophet who can think out and argue so ably. It is because he sticks to his relentless logic that he sees no escape from his own ruthless sacrifices. There is no pettiness or vulgarity about his patriotism ; it is broadbased on culture as well as Communism ; and he writes throughout with a relish for history and political science. Communism and Fascism are battling for supremacy, and Communism must win sooner or later. He advocates a Constituent Assembly because it will pass the lead to the masses. The Hindu Mahasabha and other communal organisations must go, as far as they are communal, anti-national and reactionary. He accepts non-violence as a necessity as well as on principle ; but non-violence to him is no infallible creed, and he would prefer freedom with violence to subjection with non-violence. He protests in vain against those little corners of Hell, called prisons and penitentiaries. His tribute to Mr. M. N. Roy is charming and generous. It is, however, clear that the Pandit does not suffer from too much charm. 'A Window in Prison' is typical of his scintillating satire. The British Empire, the sundried bureaucrat, Sir Malcolm Hailey, or the prison Superintendent, are victims of his mockery which is Voltairean and sometimes vulturish. Whither India ? he asks, and answers : 'To the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class, to national freedom within the framework of an international co-operative socialist world federation.' India suffers today from its mob of namby-pamby prophets. But Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi are the most powerful publicists among our rarer prophets. Their styles, like their personalities, are distinguished by sincerity and power—Gandhi all pity and pathos and self-exploration, Nehru all contempt and indignation and uncompromising clarity of vision. Pandit Jawaharlal writes like the voice of tremendous world-forces, so clearly and inevitably, without frizzles, without fancies. He is the most ardent of our patriots ; but he, it is clear, is no mere twentieth century Plato or Oriental Karl Marx. He is so dignified, so purposeful, so downright. He is nearer Lenin.

M. CHALAPATHI RAU

TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Editor : K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the elect. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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*. . . he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !*

—The Song Celestial

‘The Triple Stream’¹

BITTER AND SWEET

The New Year’s Day is the same for Andhra and Karnataka. Some other provinces celebrate it a week later. To give a foretaste of the sorrow and joy of the coming year, the bitter margosa blossom is mixed with sugar, and this strange dish is taken as the year begins. In the evening, people gather in temple or grove to listen to a recital of the calendar,—the personnel of the cabinet of the planets for the year, the prospects of the crops, the coming of fire and flood, of monsoon and eclipse. For the individual as well as the race, one year is very much like another. There may be just a little variation in the proportions in which pleasure and pain are mixed by Fate; but what matters really is the determination to welcome the bitter with the sweet, to bear in mind that ‘Even this will pass away.’ To the readers of *Triveni*, we send forth greetings for the New Year.

KRISHNAMURTI’S TALKS

In place of the bi-monthly *Star Bulletin*, the Star Publishing Trust are issuing, in separate volumes, verbatim reports of Krishnamurti’s talks in various countries. These provide an easy and direct access to his teachings. From early boyhood, Krishnamurti was marked out for an exalted position; every effort was made to give him a superb training to enable him to fulfil his destiny. In every land, devout men and women looked up to him with reverence. His lightest word was recorded; his movements were chronicled with affectionate care; and, as he passed from country to country, he was welcomed as the harbinger of a new era

¹ 4th April, 1935 (Telugu New Year’s Day).

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in the religious life of humanity. His sweetness, his utter simplicity, charmed all.

But, in 1929, he surprised his friends by dissolving the Order of the Star. He decided to forego the aid of religious organisations and of admiring interpreters of his message. Year after year, he speaks with increasing earnestness against exploitation by spiritual authority; he stresses the need for living in the 'Eternal Now'; he pleads for the change from unconsciousness to self-consciousness, from self-consciousness to the liberation from all sense of the separate self. This last, according to him, is the only natural, human state: having struggled with pain towards it, he asserts that others can do likewise. His is the gospel of liberty in the realm of the spirit. In trying to describe his experience, he invents a technique and a nomenclature of his own; but if the reader has not had a glimpse of the vision, all verbal descriptions of it must remain defective. This again means that every one must cut out his own path to Reality. Krishnamurti comes into conflict with established religions, traditions and formulas. He is a valiant fighter in the cause of spiritual freedom,—a living symbol of the eternal search of man for the God within himself.

UDAY SHANKAR IN MADRAS

Uday Shankar's second visit to Madras has proved an unqualified success. Appreciation of his dance compositions of 1935 from the Pundits who criticised those of 1933, indicates a *rapprochement* between the artiste and the votaries of Bharata Natya. His efforts to co-ordinate the dance traditions of different parts of India, and weave them into a marvel of beauty and grace, have won the admiration of all art-lovers. With the joyous enthusiasm and abandon of the born artist, he combines the patience of the researcher; and working on old and seemingly worn-out materials, he yet transports his audience into a fairyland of colour and movement. The vision of Uday Shankar as the dancing Siva and as the Player on the Flute will dwell in our memory along-

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side of the noblest achievements of the artistic genius of India in recent times,—with the music of Seshanna's *Veena*, with the *Sati* of Nandalal Bose, and the *Gitanjali* of Tagore.

A LANDSCAPE PAINTER

An exhibition of paintings by a single artist—and all of them landscapes—is something unusual. But it is a great advantage to be able to study the technique of a landscape painter from a hundred water-colours spread out in one room. We then learn to appreciate the uniqueness of his interpretation of Nature's moods, of the play of light on sea and mountain, flower and leaf. Mr. V. V. Bhagiradhi's array of landscapes at the Gokhale Hall, Madras, attracted quite a large number of visitors last week. He is a gifted painter, with a definite contribution to modern Indian Art. His intense absorption in his work, and the rapidity with which he produces pictures of rare merit, are remarkable. From the mountains and the waterfalls of Jeypore to the shrine of the virgin Goddess of Cape Comorin, he has wandered in search of beauty. His 'Bhongir Fort,' 'Godavari near the Papi Hills,' and 'Near Hussain Sagar' (lent by Mr. S. V. Ramamurty) received warm praise. There is a quality even in his smallest pictures. Pre-eminently a lover of the rocks, Mr. Bhagiradhi is akin to them in his rugged strength and his steadfast fight against adversity. We wish him all success.

THE ASSEMBLY

The disciplined strength of the Congress has made itself felt at every stage of the discussion on the Budget, but so long as the Governor-General has the power of 'restoration,' the victories of the Congress cannot bring relief to the taxpayer. When Congressmen sought the suffrage of the electors, they never imagined that they could bring the Government down on its knees. All that they had ever hoped to do was to expose the utter hollowness of the claim of the Government that it governed the country with the willing consent of the people, that in fact it knew the mind—and

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the needs—of the nation much better than a handful of discontented politicians who filled the prisons just because they found nothing better to do. Here is a Government that can carry on despite defeat after defeat. Opposed to it is the Congress which undoubtedly commands a majority in the country. Interpellations, adjournment motions, severe criticism of the policy and measures of the Government, sum up the achievements of the Congress; for, all opportunity for the display of constructive statesmanship is cruelly denied to the people's representatives under the present constitution. Whether, after the present session, the members of the Assembly will tour their constituencies and lead a crusade against the Government of India Bill remains to be seen. Work in the Assembly is but supplementary to wider work in the country. In organising the nation and educating it into a knowledge of its just rights, the experience gathered during the last few months on the floor of the Assembly ought to prove invaluable.

K. R.

TWO VETERAN SCHOLARS

The first two weeks of March 1935 saw the celebration of two notable events in Madras. The first was the honour done by Tamil-lovers to Mahamahopadhyaya Dakshinatyakalanidhi, Doctor V. Swaminatha Iyer on his Satabhishekam. Very few scholars can attain to the eminence that Mahamahopadhyaya Swaminatha Iyer occupies in Tamil. His services to the Tamil language and literature are unique. For nearly fifty years, he has devoted himself heart and soul to the publication of classical Tamil literature and of works on grammar. His is the glory of having rescued a major part of the current Tamil classics from neglect, oblivion and ruin. He has furnished a tangible proof of the saying that the surest way to overcome death is to devote oneself strenuously and uninteruptedly to work. His early life and education and his position as Tamil Pundit in the Government colleges at Kumbacanam and at Madras have been helpful to him in his work. He

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wears lightly the rare honours conferred by the triple sources of honour,—the Government, the University and the public. May he long continue unostentatiously in his noble task with the energy and enthusiasm of youth !

The event of the second week was the farewell given to Mahamahopadhyaya, Prof. S. Kuppuswamy Sastri, M.A. on the eve of his retirement from Government service. Like Swaminatha Iyer, Professor Sastri has proved himself an exceptionally good Acharya. Tamil and the other Indian languages did not find favour with the educational authorities in the days of Swaminatha Iyer's punditship; and consequently his scholarship had to find scope in editing works and in the training of private pupils. Professor Sastri, on the other hand, found full scope for his scholarship (and for the ripe experience of teaching gained by controlling the Sanskrit colleges at Mylapore and Tiruvadi) in organising and conducting the honours school of Sanskrit at the Presidency College, Madras. 'Not only has he been a researcher himself, but even more important than that, he has been a potent cause of research in others.' He had played a very useful part in the activities of the academic bodies, particularly of the Madras, the Mysore, the Andhra and the Annamalai Universities, in the building up of the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, in the Madras University Oriental Research Institute and in the Tamil Lexicon. It is hoped that in the leisure of retired life, his ripe wisdom will be devoted to maintaining with augmented glory the reputation for Sanskrit research which Madras has built up under his fostering care and guidance.

V. N.

Dance Traditions of South India

By K. V. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A.

Something of the beauty of the early Hindu art survives in the indigenous dance and drama,—in the ‘Terukoothu’ of the Tamils, the ‘Veethi Nataka’ of the Andhras, the ‘Bayalatta’ of the Kannadigas, in the dynamic attitudes of ‘Kathakali,’ in the refined idiom of the nautch, in the curves and contours of the ‘Kuchipudi’ dance. Transplanted in by-gone ages in Siam, Cambodia and Java, these very arts continue to ‘astonish, enrapture, elevate’ not only the peoples of those far-off countries, but also many European lovers of beauty, thanks to whom the dances of these countries are known to us far better than those of our own. It is not any casual resemblance that these arts have in common, but an identity in their basic technique of gesture sequences and floor contacts, and those vital attitudes that sum up a series of fleeting attitudes in one expressive movement—an identity so close and continuous that to derive these diverse systems from the classic dance of India, is to prove the obvious. A brief review of some of the salient features of the South Indian traditions indicating the points of contact with one another and with the classical dance is all that is attempted in the following pages.

(1)

The Yaksha Gana players of the Karnataka represent an authentic school of Indian dance that deserves to be preserved at all costs. Through a word and a step and a beat of the drum, these artists create portraits of epic heroism and raise visions of battles made beautiful through art. The gorgeous costume, the towering ‘kirta’ that accentuates the toss head, the mammoth girdle that suggests mountainous strength, the rhythmic movements, steps and gyrations in which anger incarnates itself, the sophisticated attack, counter-attack and

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defence, in dance language—the ‘yuddha charis,’ ‘nyayas’ and ‘pravicharas’ of Bharata—to the accompaniment of fierce challenges, disdainful admonitions—the powerful ‘vachikabhinaya’ in which the modulations of voice enrich and galvanise words, intertwined with the thrilling cadences of the drum—every little detail helps to recapture the beauty of heroism and courage. The lure of the battle exercises an unique fascination over these artists and they revert to it again and again, even creating situations for it where the original stories do not warrant them. Next to these dance pictures of war, a feature shared by the ‘Terukoothu’ which has a specific terminology for these, ‘vachikabhinaya’ is the most noteworthy feature of this school, *viz.*, ‘abhinaya’ that resides not only in the speech but in the nuances of voice that render it—the crescendo of the challenge, the thunderous cry that announces the Rakshasa’s ferocious wakefulness and the many other significant modulations and silences. No wonder that this powerful ‘vachikabhinaya’ has relegated ‘angikabhinaya’ to the background and confined it to certain characters and situations. The most beautiful feature of this art is its use of pure dance,—a feature characteristic of ‘Terukoothu’ as well—as a prelude to speech and an accompaniment to song, very much like a motif of flower and foliage twining in and out of human and divine figures, a kind of dance analogue of the decorative architectural designs that encase and set off sculpture. The feminine dances of this school belong to a far lower plane of expression and are comparatively feeble and unconvincing. A reference to the Karnataka dancers would be incomplete if homage is not paid to Ganapati Prabhu of Sri Perudur, an artist of high rank whose movements in general and neck-movement (‘griva rechaka’) in particular are marked by natural grace and restraint.

(2)

If the feminine dances of the Yaksha Gana fail to convince by their feebleness, those of the Kuchipudi school

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are exceptionally vigorous and energetic, though perhaps they are hardly what one would call feminine. It would be rash for the present writer to formulate judgment on the Kuchipudi artists from a single much-abridged performance of 'Usha Parinaya' rendered in incongruously modern attire, but that they triumphed over all handicaps is due to the dance whose essential beauty nothing could suppress. 'Vachikabinaya' of a very distinct kind there is in this art, along with an elaborate and sometimes over-elaborate 'angikabhinaya,' but one missed the delicacy and daintiness of the nautch, especially the co-ordination of the intricacies of facial expression, the play of mood and counter-mood and the 'hastabhinaya'; one missed too the continuous syllabification by the feet that accompanies significant gestures in certain compositions of the nautch—a sacrifice perhaps rendered necessary by the dramatic end in view. But of strength and power there was an abundance, in place of the refinements of the nautch, which inhere partly in the dance itself and partly in the feminine medium that expounds it. It is not known whether the Andhra repertoire includes evolutionary compositions similar to those of the nautch, with parts organically related, though the materials for building up these are present as well as repetitive sequences called 'muddayis' similar to the Tamil 'tirmanas.' The chief merit of the Kuchipudi school is that it preserves a balance among the several modes of 'abhinaya' of which 'natya' is the coincidence, more than the Karnataka or South Canara school where 'vachikabhinaya' has overshadowed 'angabhinaya' and the Kathakali wherein 'angabhinaya' has eliminated the 'abhinaya' of speech. As in the other systems, pure dance constitutes the glory of the Kuchipudi school,—especially its series of specific 'nritta hastas,' floor contacts and attitudes, some of which are to be found in the nautch, but which other traditions appear to have forgotten. In this respect the Kuchipudi system has closer affinity to the nautch than to any other school: the 'nritta hastas' (patterned movements of the hands), as in the nautch,

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have maintained a precision and clarity, in comparison with which those of Kathakali appear uncertain and indefinite. The repertoire of the Kuchipudi artists includes a number of rare cadences absent from most of the parallel traditions, for instance, the cadence 'thom dhimi' in which the torso along with the arms executes a very graceful forward and backward flexion. To the dance of the future, the Kuchipudi system has undoubtedly many precious gifts to offer. Vedantam Raghaviah claims the honours as the best exponent of this school by his amazing record in speedy execution; but the homage that is due to knowledge belongs really to his Guru, Chinta Venkataramiah, who trained him. This ancient is a master of the art,—the last among a line of 'Natyacharyas' and one of the few living authorities on the subject.

(3)

The following notes on the Kathakali are based chiefly on the recitals of Gopinath, the talented partner of Ragini Devi, and to a small extent on the rehearsals of Vallathol's troupe at Madras on its way home. To the courtesy of Ragini Devi are due the accompanying illustrations of herself and of Gopinath: the prints from sculpture are the writer's own, gathered many years ago¹ for the purpose of study more than that of reproduction,—a circumstance that explains their indifferent quality as photos.

The first noteworthy feature of the Kathakali is its rejection of 'vachikabhinaya' for the purpose of intensifying 'angikabhinaya'; that by such sacrifice 'angabhinaya' has gained volume as well as power, needs no proof. The technique of 'hastabhinaya' is similar to that of the nautch, but while the 'abhinaya' of the nautch is passionate and lyrical and, in its higher manifestations, interpretative and creative, that of the Kathakali is, in accord with the text of the play, often descriptive and sometimes transcriptive, but dynamic always and dramatic. More than the play, the skill and imagination of

¹ 1, 2 and 4 from the precincts of the temple of the Goddess at Chidambaram, and 3 from Belur.

the artists who interpret it determine the character of 'abhinaya' in the Kathakali; how profound and moving the 'abhinaya' could be and to what heights of persuasive eloquence it could soar was witnessed in the duet between Krishna and Arjuna, especially the iterations of Krishna in the transcendental symbology of gesture. Here was a language which, more than Sanskrit, was the speech of the gods; and who would distract its ceremonious beauty and infinite suggestiveness with a painted curtain or other mechanical aid when it needed none? At its highest, the Kathakali is an all-comprehensive art.

At ordinary levels, however, the Kathakali reveals a distinct realistic bias and prefers to serve the actual in place of the imaginative visions of the actual,—an instance of the concession that Art had to make to Life in the interests of intelligibility. How could uncultivated audiences follow the 'abhinaya' narrative, by itself sufficiently unintelligible, made doubly obscure by the omission of speech? Realism provided an easy way out of the difficulty. That the Kathakali made use of it is no wonder, because other traditions have reacted like wise under similar circumstances,—the serious Terukoothu, for instance, that exhausted itself in a debauch of low comedy. Lovers of the art who call the Kathakali 'primitive' and on the strength of that adjective claim a pre-Aryan antiquity for it, have no more basis for their theory than the abrupt realism of the Kathakali which, from Bharata's point of view, was a shortcoming inevitable in the ages when his ideals were forgotten. And those among us who bestow a distant and formal patronage on the Kathakali on account of its origin in a period of general decadence are apt to exaggerate its lapses and overlook its essential beauty and its very genuine claims to represent the 'Natya' of Bharata. The Kathakali is no isolated curiosity from Kerala, but one of the many parallel traditions that Bharata's teachings have inspired.

The gesture materials employed by the Kathakali in fact are as old as Bharata; whether its immediate source was the aristocratic Cakkiar Koothu or the Krishnan Attam, its ulti-

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mate source was the very system on which the Cakkiar Koothu and the Krishnan Attam had based themselves, *viz.*, the classical Dance Art of ancient India of which Bharata was the theoretical exponent. What matters it if, like Ekalavya, the Kathakali obtained its gift of knowledge indirectly? On the basis of the dance vocabulary of the Kathakali which is far anterior to the 17th century, the legend that assigns the Kathakali to this age, instead of being understood literally, should be interpreted to signify some phase in the vernacularization of the Sanskrit Drama, when the Kathakali broke away from the parent system, either because of its aggressive realism or because it discarded some essentials of that system. Legends do not constitute history, though sometimes they embody valuable historical truths.

'Cakha' was the name of a system of 'abhinaya' that employed beautiful and variegated movements of the entire arm, called 'vartanas.' Each of the 'abhinaya hastas' had a corresponding propelling movement, and the form of 'angikabhinaya' accompanied by these whole-arm movements was known as 'Cakhabhinaya.' Our knowledge of the 'vartanas' is derived from a passage from Kohala abstracted by Kallinatha in his commentary on the 'Sangita Ratnakara.' To what extent the dance of the Cakkiars is based on 'Cakhabhinaya' and whether the classical 'vartanas' have found their way into the Kathakali through that source, are questions that await detailed investigation at the hands of scholars. The reference in 'Cilappadikaram' is unmistakably to the expert in Cakha.

The linear decorations of the face, especially the extensions of the line of the eyebrow and eye for the purpose of accentuating the 'abhinaya' of the face ('upanga abhinaya'), the painted approximations of the mask which render the character impersonal and simultaneously limit the 'abhinaya' to one dominant emotion, the costume and make-up generally, are features that the Kathakali shares with the Tamil, Telugu and Karnataka traditions of the open-air drama, and the advantage of artistic merit in some respects is in favour of the

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latter. So also the technique of 'angikabhinaya,' is one that is familiar to the nautch and the Kuchipudi Bhagavatars. But the Kathakali's right to recognition as a classical art is based on its memory, at least in outline, of some of the ancient dance cadences,—the 'karanas'—and its use of these supremely expressive forms in 'abhinaya.' Some of the more graceful and seductive of these cadences occur in the nautch and to some extent in the Kuchipudi system as well, as pure dance, but neither the nautch nor the Kuchipudi school employs them as media of 'abhinaya' as the Kathakali unmistakably does.

What is a 'karana'? 'Karana' is the cadence of the body in dance that resolves itself into a patterned movement of the hands ('nritta hasta') and a corresponding beautiful movement of the feet ('chari'), preceded and followed by a rhythmic and harmonious attitude of the body ('sthana'). The 'vaishnava sthana' for instance—that attitude in which the Buddha is represented at Ajanta—was one in which the chest was thrown slightly forward, body flexed graciously and relaxed, and the feet a little parted, with hands to correspond; when such an attitude was co-ordinated in a continuous and exquisite movement, the cadence was known as a 'karana.' A sequence of these 'karanas' in a predetermined order and within the limits of 'tala,' formed the classical 'angaharas'—the theme of Siva's dance. It is worth remembering that this is an imaginative dance that rejects the burden of the human spirit and interprets neither 'pada' nor 'vakya' and accepts no theme or programme other than itself,—a thing of beauty like the 'raga' in which the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression. Later, when the classical playwright sought to make his poem visible on the stage, he readily seized these cadences of dance and music ('karana' and 'raga') as his media of visible and audible expression. Thus the karana¹ 'leenum'

¹For sculptures of 'karanas' from the Nataraja temple, Chidambaram, the reader is referred to the Madras Epigraphical report, 1914; Mr. M. Ramakrishna Kavi, M.A., has reproduced these in the edition of the 'Natya Sastra' Vol. I, published by the Baroda Durbar.

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was employed in situations where the heroine was beseeching her lord; 'apaviddham' in anger; 'valitorukam' in the coy love of the 'mugdha'; 'swastika rechitam' in joy; 'nikuttanam' in self-importance; 'katichhinnam' in wonder; 'vakshaswastikam' in sympathy; 'unmattakam' in pride born of beauty-consciousness; 'mattallī' in love etc. A less exalted office was sometimes assigned to some of the 'karanas,' for instance, 'samanakham' announced the commencement of the dance; 'dikswastikam' indicated the change of music; and 'akshiptam' denoted the clown. According as these cadences were intended for men or women, they divided themselves into two classes,—the 'uddhata' or forceful, energetic kind which embraced such 'karanas' as 'garudaplutakam,' 'dandakarechitam,' etc., and the 'sukumara,' the graceful and dainty, some of which have already been mentioned as having found employment in crucial situations of the play. The great Abhinavagupta has, in his invaluable commentary on the 'Natya Sastra,' given us a good number of passages from ancient Prakrit dramas for the appropriate introduction of the 'karanas,' a study of which is indispensable for the student of Indian dance. If some of the daintier cadences have been appropriated by the nautch, the Kathakali has retained in outline some of the 'uddhata' movements.

It is not claimed that the Kathakali artists render these movements by employing the very 'nritta hastas' and 'charis' enjoined by Bharata. In fact, the dances have undergone a twofold change: in many instances, what were originally cadences have congealed into attitudes that neither begin nor end the movement, but occur in the middle of it; in other instances, what were originally immobile attitudes have developed a swaying movement in dance and 'abhinaya.' However confused the memory and displaced the attitude, the memory is unquestionably there; and the Kathakali remains one of our principal sources for reconstructing the classical dance.

Every movement of dance begins with a basic attitude—

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'sthana'—and the classic attitudes are many, and of these the nautch prefers some, while Kathakali prefers others. Sculpture print (1) illustrates the beautiful disposition of the body at the commencement of the dance in 'mandala sthana'—the 'lata hastas' reaching down to the knee creeper-wise, hip lowered, thighs and legs bent and turned gracefully, the feet looking towards either side with an interval of one 'tala'¹ between them. This 'mandala sthana,' but with the hands arranged differently, is a very common attitude in nautch and the 'karanas' carved at Chidambaram from a girl model, with very few exceptions, have all been rendered from this basic attitude. A predominantly masculine art that Kathakali is, the 'vaikakha sthana' with an interval of three and a half 'talas' between the feet, is the natural and most common Kathakali attitude. Gopinath's poses (Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5) illustrate the disposition of the legs in this posture.

Sculpture (2) is the end of a cadence called 'ardhamattalli' expressive of the intoxication of youth, rendered from the 'mandala sthana.' This 'ardha mattalli' is an eternal favourite with the South Indian sculptor who has given endless reproductions of it at Chidambaram, Kumbakonam, Darasuram, Tanjore and Madura. This occurs in the Kathakali on a basic 'vaisakha sthana' instead of the 'mandala' (fig. 4 of Gopinath) as an attitude of ease from which the hero surveys his beloved and takes in every detail of her form before describing her perfections. In the classical dance, this is a movement, whereas in Kathakali it is just an immobile but rhythmic attitude.

The 'karana' was the co-ordination of the beautiful movements of hands and feet. The 'nritta hastas' were the patterns of beautiful movements of hands; the 'charis' were the corresponding beautiful movements of feet. These 'charis' were of two kinds,—the 'bhoumya' and the 'akasa' charis; in the former the feet never lost contact with the ground; in the latter the foot was lifted away from the

¹ 'Tala' was a unit of linear measurement and denoted the length between the outstretched thumb and forefinger.





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ground. The movement which lifted the left foot of the Nataraja and sent it athwart the right leg is an example of an 'akasa chari.' Though the nautch and Kathakali are familiar with both these classes of movements, the nautch finds more frequent employment for the 'bhooma charis,' while Kathakali prefers the 'akasa charis' more often. Sculpture (4) gives a vivid idea of the 'oordhvajanu' foot movement in co-ordination with the hand movement 'karihasta.' Figure 8 of Gopinath gives the Kathakali equivalent of the 'oordhvajanu chari' along with an upward movement of the hands. This attitude occurs in the middle of a forward movement in the 'kalasam' of 8 'matras' beginning 'takrukrruta'—a vigorous movement employed in heroic situations. Sculpture (3) from Belur, the 12th century capital of the Hoysalas, is a sculptor's version of a similar movement from an entirely different part of India, the northern extremity of Mysore. Another print in the writer's possession tallying more closely with that of Gopinath could not be included because the hands were out of focus. The reason for matching this 12th century carving with Gopinath's dance is to indicate the common source of both, viz., the classical dance of India. A preliminary movement called 'chuvadu' employs the same foot movement. (Fig. 9.)

The 'swastika' movement in which the feet cross each other occurs in a 'misra gati kalasam' of the formula 'tai—dhi tai—dhi ti tai—dhi ti ti tai' in which the dancer moves sideways to the right and left in accord with the syllables. This furnishes another contact with ancient dance. Figure 7 is the end of the first movement, and the entire movement may be any one of those cadences in which the feet keep crossing each other,—possibly the 'uromandalam.' With a touch or two Gopinath's semi-seated posture at the beginning of his 'garuda' dance may well approximate to the classical 'gridhravalinakam.' Figure 5 which looks like the end of the karana 'vartitam' in 'vaisakha sthana' is frequently employed in the Kathakali to denote grief. The Kathakali has a dance portrait of the elephant, and at the end of it occurs the

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Kathakali equivalent of the arm-movement 'karihasta' together with an upraised knee (fig 6). Figure 1 is the usual attitude of rest in the Kathakali and has been included for being compared with a similar posture in the nautch. Figure (2) represents something similar to the karana 'talapushpaputam' on a basic 'vaisakha sthana,' but the movements of which bear no resemblance to those of the classical cadence. Figure 11 is a combination pose,—the pose of hands of one 'kalasam' having been fitted on to the semi-seated posture of another; in effect the picture appears as if the karana 'unmattaka' had been rendered in an 'upavishta sthana.' And that terrible attitude (fig. 10) in which anger has taken bodily shape,—one leg thrust forward in a pointed stride and the head and torso tilted backward to produce a vibrant line, may well represent the Kathakali recollection of the Bharata cadence 'soochi'; an Aswatthama may very appropriately enter the stage in such a manner in quest of his father's murderer.

Fig. 3 is from a 'kalasam' called 'rettivattam' in which the body is flexed now to one side and now to the other with a semi-circular movement, the hands forming alternately a 'sandamsa' and 'alapallava.' This 'sandamsa-alapallava' alternation, corresponding to the 'hamsasya-alapallava' combination of the nautch, is the most frequent hand accompaniment to floor contacts in the Kathakali. These very 'hastas,' but with an upward direction, occur in the fine picture of Ragini Devi (fig. 12) which illustrates not only the beautiful flexions of a typically feminine attitude, but also the artiste's easy familiarity with the Kathakali technique.

No description of the Kathakali could ignore the significance of the drum in this wonderful pantomime. Those who have seen Gopinath's little masterpiece—the hunter's dance—would recollect what an integral part of the movement the drum cadences were. Indeed the drum furnishes an intimate and unique kind of commentary on every turn of the head and hand, every glance of the eye, every movement of the eyebrow in 'abhinaya' and dance,—refinements that by themselves deserve a whole chapter.

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What is a 'kalasam'? According to Sarangadeva, 'kalasam' was an instrumental finale in which the drums and cymbals took part; when the 'kalasam' was played, the danseuse was directed to remain still and motionless as in a painted picture. But the 'kalasams' of the Kathakali are dance sequences corresponding to the 'tirmanas' of nautch. It is a common phenomenon in the history of dance for a drum sequence to get converted into a dance sequence; for instance, the 'malapanga' and 'malapa' drum sequences survive as the dances 'chinna malappu' and 'periya malappu' in the nautch,—sequences of pure dance (*nritta*) performed in front of the processional deity at the four cardinal points. It is the 'kalasams' that embody the greater part of the 'tandava' attitudes and are therefore a vital part of the Kathakali. 'Kalasams' are many and varied and known by such names as 'eduthu kalasam,' 'vattamittu kalasam' etc; sometimes these names denote more than one 'kalasam.' Gopinath mentions an 'ashta kalasam' corresponding to the 'tillana' of the nautch. In our quest after the forgotten dances of ancient India, the Kathakali technique in general and the 'kalasams' in particular hold the key to an important part of the materials that elude us elsewhere.

Why these beautiful 'kalasams' were omitted from the programme of Vallathol's troupe, and why the inevitable stool replaced the wonderful 'upavishta sthanas' of dance, are questions I have never been able to answer. Among the first to discern the beauty of the Kathakali and the first also to spread its message in other provinces, Ragini Devi, it must be owned, has made liberal and excellent use of the pure dances of the Kathakali in her recitals.

(To be concluded)

The Case for Rejection

(*A SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE*)¹

By B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

(*Member, Working Committee of the Congress*)

Turn to Budgets for a moment. A most unusual and altogether novel procedure is introduced in the J. P. C. Report in relation to Budgets. The J. P. C. is not satisfied with the recommendation of the White Paper that the Federal Upper House should, at the instance of Government, be able to demand that any grant which has been reduced or rejected by the Lower House should be brought up before a Joint Session. 'We think,' says the J. P. C. Report, 'that all demands should be considered first by the Lower House and subsequently by the Upper, and that the powers of each House in relation to any demand should be identical, any difference being resolved by a joint session to be held forthwith.'

Much the most astounding provision in the whole Report is contained in the Second Schedule, which enumerates the provisions of the Bill the amendment whereof is not to affect the validity of the Instrument of Accession of a State. Thus, any amendment relating to the following points will invalidate the Instrument of Accession, and this means that these powers which are really the reserved powers under the Act cannot be transferred even by Parliament without entitling a State to walk out of the Federation. Yet, the Bill speaks of the inability of the States—once they gain access to the Federation—to secede. Let us briefly review the provisions whose amendment is virtually interdicted, rather we extract nearly the whole Schedule for the interest it abounds in.

PART II, CHAPTER II

The exercise by the Governor-General, on behalf of His Majesty, of the executive authority of the Federation,

¹ The main article was published in *Triveni* for Nov.-Dec. 1934.

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and the definition of the functions of the Governor-General; the executive authority of the Federation; the functions of the council of ministers, and the choosing and summoning of ministers and their tenure of office; the functions of the Governor-General with respect to external affairs and defence; the special responsibilities of the Governor-General relating to the peace or tranquillity of India or any part thereof, the financial stability and credit of the Federal Government, the rights of Indian States, and the discharge of his functions by or under the Act in his discretion or in the exercise of his individual judgment; the provisions relating to His Majesty's Instrument of Instructions to the Governor-General; the superintendence of the Secretary of State; and the making of rules by the Governor-General for the transaction of, and the securing of transmission to him of information with respect to, the business of the Federal Government.

PART II, CHAPTER III

The number of the representatives of British India and of the Indian States in the Council of State and the Federal Assembly and the manner in which they are to be chosen; the disqualifications for membership of the Council of State and of the Federal Assembly in relation to the representatives of the State; the procedure for the introduction and passing of Bills; joint sittings of the two Chambers; the assent to Bills, or the withholding assent from Bills by the Governor-General; the reservation of Bills for the significance of His Majesty's pleasure; the annual financial statement; the charging on the revenues of the Federation of the salaries, allowances and pensions payable to or in respect of the Judges of the Federal Court, of expenditure for the purpose of the discharge by the Governor-General of his functions with respect to external affairs, defence, and the administration of any territory in the direction and control of which he is required to act in his discretion, and of the sums payable to His Majesty in respect of the expenses incurred in discharging the functions of the Crown in its relations with Indian States; the procedure with respect to estimates and demands for grants; supplementary financial statements; the making of rules

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by the Governor-General for prohibiting the discussion or the asking of questions on any matter connected with any Indian State ; the making of rules by the Governor-General as to the procedure with respect to joint sittings of, and communications between, the two Chambers.

PART II, CHAPTER IV

The power of the Governor-General to promulgate ordinances in his discretion or in the exercise of his individual judgment, or to enact Governor-General's Acts.

PART III, CHAPTER II

The special responsibility of the Governor relating to the rights of Indian States and the superintendence of the Governor-General in relation thereto.

PART III, CHAPTER III

The making of rules by the Governor for prohibiting the discussion of, or the asking of, questions on any matter connected with any Indian State.

PART V, CHAPTER I

The power of the Federal Legislature to make laws extending to a State or the subjects thereof, the power of the Governor-General to empower either the Federal Legislature or Provincial Legislature to enact a law with respect to any matter not enumerated in any of the Lists in the Seventh Schedule to this Act ; the provisions of the chapter relating to inconsistency between a Federal law and a State law.

PART V, CHAPTER II

The previous sanction of the Governor-General to the introduction or moving of any Bill or amendment affecting matters reserved to the discretion of the Governor-General in relation to defence or external affairs : the power of Parliament to legislate for British India or any part thereof, or the restrictions on the power of the Federal Legislature and of Provincial Legislatures to make laws on certain matters.

PART VI

In so far as the provisions of that Part relate to Indian States.

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PART VII, CHAPTER I

In so far as it relates to Burma.

PART VII, CHAPTER II

Loans and guarantees to Federal States.

PART VIII

The constitution and functions of the Federal Railway Authority; the conduct of business between the Authority and the Federal Government; and the determination of questions arising between the Authority and the Ruler of a Federated State.

PART IX, CHAPTER I

In so far as it relates to appeals to the Federal Court from High Courts in British India; the power of the Governor-General to refer questions of law to the Federal Court; the power of the Federal Legislature to confer further powers upon the Federal Court for the purpose of enabling it more effectively to exercise the powers conferred upon it by this Act.

PART XII

Resolutions of the Federal Legislature or any Provincial Legislature recommending amendments of this Act or Orders in Council made thereunder.

FOURTH SCHEDULE

The oath of affirmation to be taken or made by the Ruler or subject of an Indian State.

SEVENTH SCHEDULE

Any entry in the Legislative Lists which has not been accepted by the State as a Federal subject.

* * * *

The addition of Schedule 2 to the Bill virtually brings about this condition of things :

1. A State has to make a declaration that it is willing to abide by this Act.
2. This, when accepted by the King, forms the foundation of the Federation.

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3. The Act so formulated has two sets of sections, (a) some enumerated as Chapters in Sec. 2, (b) those 'saved'.

Virtually these are (a) Structural, and (b) Functional.

4. No amendment relating to matters enumerated (not saved, *i.e.*, matters structural) shall affect the validity of the Declaration.

5. But in any case such an amendment is not binding on or does not extend to any Federated State—unless the Prince individually concurs in it. The implications of such an arrangement are with regard to matters 'saved' in Schedule 2. (*i.e.*, functional matters), that any amendment of the Act in respect of 'saved' matters affects the validity of the declarations of the Federating States, and thus produces one of two results. Either the Federation is dissolved, or amendments are made impossible at the inception or in the implementing. In effect then, while structural amendments are capable of being passed with the consent of the Federating State and in any case in respect of British India, *i.e.*, while structural amendments are capable of being made to apply to British India and such of the States as consent to them, functional amendments destroy the Federation itself or destroy themselves.

EXAMPLES

Structural.—Appointment of the Commander-in-Chief, Financial adviser, Advocate-General.

Composition of Legislatures in respect of British India Provincial Governments.

Functional.—Reserved Powers. Railway Board. Functions of the Reserve Bank Services.

Really the object is to prevent the change of the Act in response to further agitation or by, say, a Labour Government, and to use the States in the Federation as an additional and effectual bar to further progress.

We now understand why the decennial statutory enquiry of the Montford scheme is abandoned, for this Act will be not for a decade, nor for a generation, but for eternity.

Poor Saraswati

By K. SWAMINATHAN, M.A.

There has been in recent years much mischievous talk against our present system of education. People as widely apart as Mahatma Gandhi and Sir K. V. Reddi, as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, have been busy and loud, preaching against this system. What value are we, teachers and students, to attach to these outbursts?

There is an instinct in every human being to criticise something or other, and the more reckless and the more extreme your criticism of a thing, the more courageous you are taken to be. Any criticism, whether mild or violent, of the army, the navy, the police force, the revenue system, or the judicial system, is fraught with danger. If Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru or Sir K. V. Reddi or Mr. Ramaswami Sastri talked of the waste of money or the misdirection of energy in any of these other ways, they would be silenced with prompt and condign punishment. But education, alas, every one can criticise with impunity, and almost every one wanders up and down the land, heaping abuse on all schools, colleges and Universities.

Not only is there no legal restraint on irresponsible criticism of education, but there is not even a social or academic demand for some *knowledge* on the part of the critics of education. While a teacher is wisely silent on the antics of our Judges, the absurdities of our legal system, and the selfish jealousy and mediæval obscurantism of the medical profession, while our Civil Engineers know nothing, and say nothing, of any waste or inefficiency in our military organization, every Judge and Councillor and Advocate and Doctor and Journalist thrusts his interfering and unwanted finger into the pie of education and makes the sorriest of trades also the most ignoble of professions.

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Leaving Gandhi on one side (for his is 'the holy madness of the pure in heart crusading through a comfortable world'), one is tempted to wonder at the ingratitude and inconsistency of the other crusaders against modern Indian education.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, shouting obstreperous abuse at our schools and colleges, still sends his own children to these very schools and colleges. Even Sir K. V. Reddi does not keep his sons at home and safe from the contamination of modern education. In fact, the sons of Sapru and Sir K. V. Reddi have all of them had brilliant academic careers and are all the better for them. We who know the facts cannot take very seriously the Saprus, the Reddis and the Rama-swami Sastris, who loudly condemn education but send their own children to schools and colleges. We shall do what they do, not what they tell us to do.

But not everybody knows the facts or stops to weigh them. The damage that is done to the boys and girls at school by these highly-spiced and widely-advertised tirades against education, is incalculable. That the standards of attainment of school and college students have gone terribly down during the last 20 years, no one can deny; and one of the chief causes, if not the chief cause, of this deterioration is the undeserved contempt into which the system of education has been brought by the unbridled talk of intemperate politicians.

When we were boys, people like Chandavarkar, Mani Aiyar, Krishnaswami Aiyar, Gokhale and Sivaswamy Aiyer, men who were not only politicians but scholars, encouraged us to work hard, to pursue knowledge and to approach our schools with the reverence due to a temple or a church. Saraswati was *then* considered a goddess worthy of worship. To us, teachers like A. Panchapagesa Aiyar and A. S. Kasturi-ranga Aiyar were indeed prophets and priests, not mere underpaid hirelings. Now all that has changed. In convocation address after convocation address, graduates are told that they have wasted their time, that knowledge is an

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unnecessary evil, and that their teachers are selfish fools who dole out their folly in exchange for fodder and stabbing. The students at school and college naturally take these estimates of the 'Brahmacharya Ashrama' at their face value, and without hope or enthusiasm on the part of pupil or teacher the process of education drags miserably on to its barren conclusion.

What exactly do these critics expect from any system of education, no matter how perfect? And what exactly are the benefits that our system has failed to yield? Even on the meanest utilitarian basis, the education which has thrown up, willy-nilly, Gandhi, Nehru, Sapru himself, Srinivasa Sastri, C. V. Raman and Radhakrishnan, this system has not failed. Education is a wasteful process. There is no proportion between the labour and the result. In this it is like Nature herself, 'who has no law, but wastes the myriad spawn to hatch a single fish.' And from the point of view of the country it is worth while that a million students should each fail thrice in the Intermediate Examination, if out of these failures a Gokhale, a Raman, a Radhakrishnan or a Nehru could spring. In addition to the production of outstanding men, our education has certainly given us all a sense of our rights and duties as citizens, and brought us from a mediæval to a modern outlook on life. If courage and self-respect are slowly replacing fear and superstition, if freedom and equality are driving away the hideous nightmare of caste, have we not reason to be thankful?

But this testing by general results is unfair in its application to education. Education is to be judged, not by the faulty and mischievous standards of its social or political utility, but by its results on the individual educand. Is or is not any given young man the better, clearly and by much, in intellect, in emotion and in physique, for taking full advantage of the facilities offered by his school? If you are going to judge the system by its effect on a young man who refused to take advantage of the facilities it offered, who pursued it half-heartedly and against his will, you are not being fair to the

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system. To be fair to it, you must judge it by its effect on one who followed it whole-heartedly, enthusiastically and with full-blooded vigour, enlarging and strengthening his intellect, refining and enriching his emotions, and making his body taut and supple like a sword of tempered steel. To the man who shuts himself up throughbut the day inside his windowless hovel, there is no brightness and no kindly healing in the sun.

The benefit to the individual educand is many-sided and important. A modern scientific training gives one a critical spirit, inductive reasoning, reliance on one's own observation, experience and judgment, freedom from blind faith and a desire for justice and equality. These things are the gifts of modern education. I say modern education, and not western education, because, till the time of Bacon and Hobbes and Montesquieu the ideas of Europe were not very different in their absurdity from the ideas of Manu himself. It was not the fault of our ancient philosophers, as it was not the fault of Aristotle and Plato, of Aquinas and Duns Scotus, that they had not read Rousseau, Karl Marx and Bertrand Russel. If to the temper and spirit of the ancient Rishis we bring the knowledge and exactitude of modern science, we shall be evolving the synthetic civilisation for which the world has been waiting. And no other means is available for bringing about this grand consummation than the dull, dry, day-to-day drudgery of our schools and colleges.

Socially, politically and culturally, our education is producing benefits but not in the required degree or with the required rapidity. The remedy is in intensifying and widening the system, not in scrapping it. The filtration of modern knowledge to the masses is painfully slow. The liquidation of illiteracy is still an ideal. If with vernacularization we combine a passionate faith in the virtue of modern scientific education and replace the Pandit and Moulana tradition by a genuine love and reverence for children and a relentless pursuit of truth, free from authoritarianism, this system will yield better results than any other that the world has conceived. One does not tear a whole tree by its roots because some of

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its leaves or some of its fruits are rotten. This system of education has yielded much good and is capable of yielding more; it deserves mending here and there by people who love children and who know their subjects, but not at all the rough handling it now gets from all and sundry.

The complaint that there is unemployment in the land is no argument at all against education. In this country at any rate education has always been considered not as a means to an end but as an end itself. To give food and training to the minds and hearts of our children is as much a duty and a necessity as to give food and training to their bodies. No doubt there are people who feed their children only because this will fit them for employment, people who would starve their children to death if there were no chance of employment; such people will refuse education to their children. But others, who feed the body irrespective of chances of employment, must feed the mind also. True Brahminism consists in giving to the mind and spirit of man at least as important a place as to his body, and the lack of faith in education is a better proof of the failure of Brahminism in our land than any other event or circumstance of recent times. Education should provide, not a means of livelihood, but a way of living. It is not the business of education, it is the business of other forces, Industry, for example, and Population-control, to make livelihood possible for all.

People who talk of the waste involved in education do not stop to calculate what proportion of the nation's human and material resources are spent on education and what proportion on other things: for example, on drink, or tobacco, or motor-cars, or preparations for war. We count carefully the pence spent on our children, while we squander pounds on evil and unnecessary things.

The complaint is sometimes made that modern Indian education has not resulted in any important discovery or invention. This is not wholly true. But even so, there is a time and place for the increase of knowledge and a time and place for the dissemination of it. In the affairs of this world,

our people are more or less in the stage of the people of England about the year 1530, and if we can make all the knowledge gathered by Europe in the last 400 years available to our own people within the next generation or two, that will be work enough for a hundred times the number of schools and colleges in this country.

But apart from this duty of disseminating modern knowledge to the masses, the great problem of education here as elsewhere is the problem of how to make good our losses. These losses are enormous and unceasing. We should bequeath to the young generation the House of Knowledge in good repair, not tumbled down and ruined. Learned men die off as rapidly as the unlearned, and the race for knowledge, for the maintenance not the progress of knowledge, is a race against 'the steady and on-coming tide of destruction and oblivion.' Every school has to fill a little of the emptiness caused by that unwearied worker, Death. Every thirty years or less, we have to replace all the knowledge and all the skill in the world. 'We have to provide that the infants and the children of today shall know all the secrets and wield all the powers of the best and wisest men now living.' If we slacken, the fate which overtook the great civilisations of the past will overtake the slowly growing, rich and complex civilisation of modern India. We must work hard if we wish to stay where we are.

Education is a struggle against the deep and treacherous river of time. Whether in the process of the years we are to become an A₁ nation or a C₃ nation, depends almost entirely on the way we treat the body, mind and spirit of the young generation, in other words, on the way we value, and establish, and provide for their education. To pursue knowledge, sincerely and disinterestedly for its own sake and for the sake of our children, should not be a difficult ideal for this, till recently, Brahmin-ridden land.

Short-sighted greed and immediate utility will paralyse and kill any system of education that accepts these standards. Germany and America may perhaps encourage such know-

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ledge only as is useful, but we in this land have learnt during some three thousand years to look upon knowledge as the tree of life. We cannot 'cultivate its branches for profit and neglect the root; we cannot apply the test of utility to knowledge that is living and growing.' The cry for vocational training and applied science is the 'cry of specialised and over-practical men and has little relevance to the broad basis of national culture. The knowledge that can be used is knowledge that has ceased to live ; it is the timber, not the growing tree, out of which you make doors and windows and furniture.

To the individual the spirit rather than the use of education is everything ; it is 'the opening of fresh eyes on the world, the exhilarating trial of new powers against the forces of the world.' It is the making of men and women, not of bread-winners or cannon-fodder or industrial units. Let us make men and women of our children and the State can well take care of itself.

Let it not be concluded that we resent all criticism ; far from it. Raman and Radhakrishnan, V. S. Sastri and Ratnawami, have in their addresses on education, shown a wholly admirable spirit and temper and tendered advice which is welcome and helpful. What we deplore is the thoughtless and mischievous invective heaped on education by those who, in education alone, clamour for an impossible perfection. To them we may say, adapting a Persian proverb :—

He who would have only a faultless friend
Must, friendless, live his life, and, friendless, end ;
He who would be from every error free
Must seek in death his sole security :
He who would go but to a perfect school
Was born, and must remain perverse, a fool !

Acme

(*A Short Story*)

By BAL S. MARDHEKAR

(1)

Shall I describe the cottage first? Rather not. I would leave it to emerge as I proceed. I was sitting on the little, spotlessly clean but crumpled up bed just near the window looking out of it. It was early morning and the cool breeze that caressed and rustled the tree-tops out of sleep wasted in an exhilarating freshness, and as it touched the bare skin of my body all over, it sent a sweet sensation, a mild thrill through it, which was reflected in the blitheness of my countenance. The varying shades of green leaves were absorbing a new liveliness from the glimmering orange yellow of the twilight. The inarticulate twitter of the birds had already begun, and the morning felt their rapturous awakening and understood the meaning of their choral hymn without knowing its language. From a long distance came the faint sound of cowbells tinkling, and as it approached nearer and nearer you could hear the mingling strains from the milkman's day-dream-world while he led his cows for milking. I sat watching this morning life for I know not how long. I was not attending to any one particular object; rather, the whole spectacle had that indefinable charm that holds one spellbound without knowing why. And in contemplating it gleefully and in smiling silence, I had so completely forgotten myself that—

'I say, Ravi,' I exclaimed, 'look at that girl. How exactly like your picture!'

Ravindra who was arranging the flowers in the vase came to the window and I looked out of it. The resemblance between the picture he was then working on and that girl there was simply startling and he was as astonished as myself,

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if not more. She was wearing a *sari* of pale orange and rose and a white silk blouse. Her face was oval rather than round, and from underneath her pencilled eyebrows and dark eyelashes quivered her bright and beautiful, wandering eyes as if, although they would no longer linger over the fast vanishing fields of childhood and innocence, they were timid, almost afraid, to roam freely over the blossoms in the Garden of Youth that was stretching before them. There was a pink rose with two green leaves on its stalk in her stamen-like hair. Swinging playfully the net in her left hand which held her books, she appeared to be going tip-toe to the morning school and one could have fancied Dawn herself had stepped down from the horizon.

'Ah,—yes, Subha,—how like,' came the words slowly. There was a note of bitterness and slight dejection in his voice. But I was in no mood to recognise it. That close likeness was convincing me that Ravindra must have seen that girl before and managed to procure her photograph. And that he should never have told me! Of course there could be no other explanation. Every detail agreed so perfectly. That charm which Ravindra was imparting to the figure on the canvas was there tint for tint in that other figure that was moving towards us. Having achieved in a divine moment of supreme creative inspiration one perfect human form and sent it down to this earth, and then despairing of his power to recreate that vision of loveliness but once more, yet in love with it, had the great Creator appeared as Ravindra to copy his own creation? At another time, I might have amused Ravi and myself with that and similar conceits. But now I was feeling hurt a bit.

'You could have told me who she was. But you *don't* know, I suppose.'

'No.'

'I see. All right.'

We were, at least I was, all this time watching that girl from the window. Suddenly she turned the corner and disappeared.—Slowly I was turning round—

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'Gracious! Man! How could you!' I simply blurted out in utter despair. The picture, that was, had come down from the board and lying on the floor, a bundle of coloured rags!

He was not listening to me. Almost mechanically, he washed his palette and his brushes and put them away. He put the towel on the rack and with heavy steps came near me and sat down on the bed. In his dark gazelle eyes there shone a heart-rending light of complete frustration—

The jasmine creeper that hung in uncertain festoons at the three sides of the window which were gently shaken by the light breeze, had winded its leafy way in the cottage. One little white jasmine flower was peeping down from the green leaves. For a long time Ravindra sat there, his eyes fixed on that suspended flower and his long fingers slowly pushing back through his silken hair as if to keep time to his thoughts.

Then he closed his eyes.—Yet his whole face expressed a silent but deep yearning for something unseen, unattainable, only felt—ever so faintly!

And how fascinating he looked in that trance of moveless meditation—!

Something stirred deeply within me—. I forgot my early resentment, forgot the girl, forgot the picture and only thought of him. I would not disturb him—. And I murmured lovingly—'Goodbye.'

'Goodbye.'

I closed the door of the cottage behind me, quietly, noiselessly.—Yet the cuckoo on the mango tree flew away up in the sky and rose higher and higher—.

(2)

'Did you see that cottage? Isn't it a dream? I wonder who lives there.'

'Where?'

'Just there, beyond that causeway on the left, under that mango tree. See it?'

'Oh, that one--yes--don't know whose it is, though.'

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'Isn't it lovely! Charu, look—that deer—and the jas-mine's in flower too! Really, but who could be living there!'

'Would you like to go and see? I can take you there, if you care to come. I am in fact going there myself and whoever is in the cottage would be only too pleased to have such guests. Besides, that cottage isn't merely a picture from outside. It's got lovely pictures inside.'

I ventured to make this offer as I remarked the particular curiosity of one of the two persons in the above dialogue. It was after nearly a year that I was going to see Ravindra again. All the year I was in North India.....And now, at the sight of that old, familiar dwelling, what a host of thoughts filled my mind, what a medley of feelings. It had not changed a great deal in appearance, perhaps. But I could see new beauty in that warm red roof: it almost seemed ready, even impatient, to hold me in an affectionate embrace. The golden rays of the evening sun lingered upon the slanting roof reluctant to withdraw. Under that roof must be Ravi. What could he be doing, I mused. He couldn't be expecting me. How jolly to surprise him like this——!

From this reverie I was roused by the talk of two persons, strangers evidently, for they did not seem to know much about the place. They were three in all—an elderly gentleman accompanied by a lady who appeared to be his daughter, and her son. The young lady was of middle height inclining rather towards tall. The sportive smile on her face and her diverting conversation betrayed a genuine culture and an innocence that was not afraid of spontaneous expression. She almost invited you to be frank without fear, and gay without constraint.

'Can't we go, Dada? We could see those pictures inside,' she said to her father and turning to me inquired, 'Who's living there? An artist? Friend, I believe?'

'Yes. Would you come with me?'

They agreed, of course, and crossing the causeway we proceeded towards the cottage. Even by the time we neared it we had become friends. Her outward formal charm blend-

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ed with an exquisite inward grace to impart a merry tone to the conversation. When Beauty knows how to talk—

Here was the cottage and stepping before them I opened the wicket gate of the garden. The flowers which had smiled the day out on their stalks were closing in their places one by one. But the tiny jasmines were frail and drooped, soon to lie faded on the green leaves. The westering sun tried to lift their faces but succeeded only in spreading a thin veil of golden hope over them. At the end of the gravel walk was the door. The deer that was grazing raised its neck and stared at us with its full, dark eyes. I entered first—.

‘Dear me!’—Suddenly but very softly exclaimed the young lady and quickly bending her head down, tried to protect her beautiful hair with her right hand from getting entangled in the jasmine creeper that hung from the trellis-arch before the door. Two tiny flowers were caught in her hair and remained there unknown to the wearer.

I pushed the door slowly and peeped in. Ravindra was washing his palette and brushes and relieving that work with furtive glances in a direction where apparently hung a newly finished picture. It was amusing to watch him do it, lingering over the brushes with the fondness of a mother, as if he would prolong his association with the creative effort by protracting this last link with it. We could not see the picture but we could see him. He was, however, so lost in the joy of achievement that he did not notice my intrusion.

‘Ravi—.’

He started—then saw me, and leaving his brushes where they were, came shouting almost hilariously,

‘Hallo, Subha! You didn’t fall out of heaven, you—! Well, here’s something—’

Then suddenly he became aware that I was accompanied by strangers, and as he saw that young lady smiling at him with mingled amusement and tenderness, he blushed—was taken aback—and for the briefest instant felt his warm blood freeze. But only for the briefest instant; in the twinkling of an eye and before anyone could perceive, he recovered his

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self-possession and serenity and welcomed his guests with courteous cordiality.

'I am so sorry I didn't see you.—Wont' you come in?', he said apologetically and moved three chairs near the table.

'Oh, it's all right, don't worry. After all we are really intruders,' replied the elderly gentleman rather reassuringly.

'Take a seat, please.' Ravindra addressed these words to the young lady. She obeyed him and smiling one of her bewitching smiles, remarked,

'Aren't we lucky to catch an artist in a rapture like this.'

Ravindra did not meet her eyes again.

'Excuse me,' he said, 'I won't be a minute.—Would you have some tea?'

'No, thank you.'

Then he quietly removed his newly finished picture to the next apartment and joined us in conversation.

We sat like that talking about all sorts of things, but mostly about art. There were many of Ravindra's paintings on the walls and some he fetched from the other room. The guests were quite obviously delighted. Such a lover of art as the young lady, come to such a shrine of the Beautiful, where, in the stillness of an embowered cottage, worshipped a young artist with the spirit of a missionary to capture the abiding loveliness of the universe and transfer it, if he could, to the canvas. . . . And she knew the art of provoking him to wax eloquent. Innocently flippant and wisely gay, she subtly broke the barriers of reserve and diffused an atmosphere of charm and fun. If she made a witty observation, Ravi would perhaps be thinking of the gentle wind that played wantonly with the *sari* in his picture. If she spoke of the subdued revelation of beauty in works of art, he would probably be remembering how he had made the soft fluffy hair in his picture half conceal the delicate curves of the ear. If she happened to dwell on the loveliness that resides in all things in this universe and on love that alone can reveal it, love that transcends individuality and embraces all creation, he would be reminded of the high

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forehead in his picture. And when at last she expressed, a little shyly but most charmingly, how happy they had been that evening to meet him and how thankful to him for showing them his pictures, he could almost have felt that he was 'retouching' the soft dimple in the rosy cheeks of his picture.

It was dark. The elderly gentleman reminded,

'But we haven't seen your new picture—'

'No, but it's—I mean there's no light now. It's better seen in daylight.'

'Well, I think that would give us an excuse to call again,—that is, if Mr. Artist wouldn't mind.'

'Not at all. On the contrary, it would be a joy. And surely you wouldn't need an excuse to come.'

They rose to go. Ravindra offered them each a bunch of Queens of the Night. We followed them to the wicket gate.

'Come along, Charu, leave that deer alone,' called the lady.

'Goodbye,' said the father.

'Goodbye,' repeated the daughter. 'Charu, say Goodbye.' A little voice whispered, 'Goodbye.'

'Goodbye,' we replied.

—I was helping myself to a glass of water and airily asked where the new picture was. Ravindra who had preceded me in the cottage dryly replied, 'There.'

What was there? Coloured rags scattered about!

I looked at Ravi. What was there? The poignant despair of futile inspiration! The piercing forlornness of a soul that felt it saw and knew it was blind. It *would* be filled but remained empty. It cried and called and felt it heard—it was an echo, not an answer. . . .

'Good night, Ravi, it's dark—I'm—'

'Will be morning—'

(3)

I was disgusted, but never spoke a word.

Ravindra was filling in the colours with a sure and a light hand. Every new tint added unforeseen beauty, so it seemed

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to *him* ! He would stop for a minute or two and gaze at the picture,—then, suddenly, his eyes would light up with a strange lustre and with inspiration welling up, brimming over his heart, he would give it a brush or two. Didn't it work a miracle ! He seemed to be under the spell of some compelling magic power and obeyed the mysterious impulse which illuminated for him a new vision of beauty and moved his hand to transfix it on the canvas. As if he was at last capturing the vision that had so far eluded him ; as if the whole world was yielding up its secret of colours, lines and masses ; as if he was swimming in the harmony that throbbed through the universe and was touching his whole being into song !—

And it was, or appeared to be, the portrait of an old emaciated woman, low browed, wrinkled, her breasts hanging down, her ribs and all the bones showing, cross-eyed, with more than one nose, and ears that were as big as the palm of a hand,—dead as a corpse !

Gradually, it was nearing completion. Thank God, I said, he would finish it today. But Ravindra had stopped. He had only to put one little red mark on the forehead. He could have done it that day, but apparently he didn't want to.

We came out in the garden and sat on a bench. There was a white moon in the western sky and the pale, white jasmine flowers were nestling in the green leaves round us. In front of me was Ravi in his thin white muslin shirt and the moonlight lay on the ground as white as snow new fallen.

' Since how long have you taken to ugly old women, Ravi,' I remarked, more to tease him than to express my opinion which, however, would not have been different.

' I am bl—d if I can see what there is to get so excited about in a dirty old hag of a creature that—'

He stared at me bewildered and surprised. I became silent. Then he smiled a tender smile of quiet contentment in a sort of perfumed ecstasy. As I started to go, I heard,

' Come early in the morning. I'll have finished it before you come, though.'

' Still, you can leave the brushes and the colours—.'

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(4)

The early morning came rather late next day. I was neither curious nor very eager. I took my time over the morning tea. Then starting leisurely I walked a few paces. There came upon me a curious feeling. . . . I felt heavy in my feet. Once near the door of the familiar cottage, I felt better and I knocked—so late and still in bed—I called aloud...there was no answer, so I pushed the door——. It was open !

Ravindra was sitting on a chair in front of that portrait, staring at it, the brush that had put the last red mark still in his hand.

'Couldn't you answer a fellow, man ?'

Still he did not stir. I was wild, and going to him placed my hands on his shoulders—'God !'—it was cold as ice !

(5)

At an international exhibition held in P——, there hung in one corner of the Indian section a portrait of an old woman entitled, 'Meaningless Beauty.'

Some were attracted by it, others were repelled ; all were arrested and challenged : every one went away either richer or poorer for the experience ; none would ever forget it !

'Ah, well, what a beauty !' whispered some one in French.

'Rather interesting.' 'What !—I can't see what it is.'

'The artist was struggling—but he failed,' sounded a profound remark in feeble German accents.

And, so on.....

A perfect Babel, for they all knew —.

Only in the opposite corner sat an old man with long hair and a flowing beard. Day after day he would come and sit there gazing at the portrait while the crowd would pass by. And sometimes his eyes would be dim and perhaps a tear would glide down his furrowed cheek. And if anyone asked him the reason of his grief, he would murmur inaudibly, in Italian : 'There was an *artist* . . . And they tell me he was very young . . . and he died of . . . '

Kalidasa and Nature

By K. BAIASUBRAMANIA AIYAR

It has been said that the poet holds the mirror up to Nature. Literary criticism, both Indian and Western, estimates the true worth of a poet and the real essence of his poetry by the poet's attitude to Nature as revealed in his works. The great literary critic, Dandin, when mentioning the various 'alankaras' of genuine poetry, gives an honoured place to 'svabhavagyana' and says: 'Truth about Nature is the culmination of all sciences and is the ideal of all poetry.' Judged from this standpoint, we may state, without fear of exaggeration, that Kalidasa, of all, is Nature's poet. His devotion to Nature rose to the height of a spiritual reverence and attained the sublimity of a religious conviction. The great English poet, Wordsworth, once expressed the regret that he was not born a Pagan, so that he may worship the beautiful aspects of Nature in the true spirit of heathen devotion :—

Great God, I had rather be
A Pagan suckled in some creed outworn ;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.

Kalidasa, much more than even Wordsworth, is profoundly convinced of the divinity of Nature. Instead of the conventional beginning of poems, adopted by Sanskrit writers, of an invocation to one's own 'Ishta Devata,' he begins the 'Kumarasambhava' by the solemn affirmation of the divinity of the Himalayas. It will be wrong to think that this ascription of divinity is merely poetic, in the sense of being unscientific or untrue. The evolution from percept to concept is a familiar method in Science. Physicists describe certain gases as obeying or disobeying Boyle's Law as if it were an enactment for their guidance, and as if Science set

forth an ideal, the perfect gas, for their imitation. The language seems to imply that gases are wanting in perfection, in that they fail to observe the exact letter of the law. Speaking in the same strain, one will have to say that Hydrogen is nearest to perfection, that Oxygen and Nitrogen are good enough in the affairs of everyday life and that Carbon-di-Oxide and Chlorine are poor sinners which yield to temptation. Sometimes, moral qualities are attributed to inanimate matter when we judge them according to the fulfilment of the purpose for which we use them. For example, we refer in scientific parlance to good and bad radiators, or good and bad insulators, as if it were a duty on their part to radiate well or insulate well; as if there were failures on the part of Nature to come up to the proper standard. In using language like this and in ascribing moral qualities to Nature, Science is dealing with the perfect concepts as evolved from the percepts of Nature. In other words, it describes the good action or bad action of a certain object as viewed from the standpoint of the perfect concept of that body. Again, it is this perfect concept of a particular object in its relation to the inner truth of the universe which is affirmed by the doctrine of 'Abhimani Devata' known to Hindu religious literature, which is as scientific as it is poetic. So, let us not run away with the feeling that when the poet is indulging in this divination of Nature, he is either roaming in the realms of pure fantasy or falling into the mire of illogicality.

When moral or spiritual qualities are ascribed to the inanimate objects of Nature, rhetoricians say that the poet who does so is using the figure of speech called 'Pathetic fallacy,' but it is neither pathetic nor is there any fallacy underlying it. Discussing this figure of speech, John Ruskin says in his *Modern Painters*, Volume III: 'The state of mind which attributes to it (Nature) these characters of a living creature is one in which the reason is unhinged by grief. All violent feelings have the same effect. They produce in us a falseness in all our impressions of external things, which I would generally characterize as the "Pathetic fallacy." But

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he adds, 'if we look well into the matter we shall find the greatest poets do not often admit this kind of falseness.' Hence we find Kalidasa saying: 'The soul under the grip of highstrung emotion naturally flows out in compassion and inundates Nature, animate and inanimate alike.' There is no falseness about it. (*Kamarthahi prakriti kripana chetana chetaneshu.*)

There are many aspects of the truth or reality of an object. Science and sense-perception may reveal only one aspect of the whole truth. For example, while mathematics confines itself when counting oranges to their aspect as 'units, and physical science may view them only as composed of atoms or electrical charges, art reveals their colour and beauty of outlines, and religion enunciates the truth of their relation to the sum-total of all objects—the universe. Kalidasa's noblest creation, Sakuntala, is the child reared in the lap of Nature. She is the intimate friend of the forest-creeper and the boon companion of the Ashrama deer. She is the foster-daughter not only of the sage Kanva but also of the divinities of the wood, and just as the sage feels intense sorrow on the occasion of his parting with Sakuntala, the Sylvan deities are said to feel poignant grief at her departure. The sage addresses them in the same manner as he would address Sakuntala's mother. To the poet's fancy a beautiful damsel and a creeper are objects alike of beauty. They are one in the æsthetic sense. One touch of magic will transform, as in the *Vikramorvasiya*, the damsel into a creeper. The creeper entwines itself round a tree, as the beloved would cling to her lover.

Man's relation to Nature in Kalidasa is an æsthetic and spiritual oneness experienced by the realisation of the essential unity of the beauty, truth and joy of man's inner being with the beauty, truth and joy of Nature. One feels alike the play of the Unseen Hand in the joyful and beautiful aspects of Nature as in the workings of the feelings and emotions of the human personality. This conviction permeates the whole attitude of the poet to Nature. Looking at the

vastness and grandeur of the sea, the poet exclaims: 'The boundless sea is as much beyond cognition as the form of Vishnu, the Lord of the Universe.' The Yaksha in the *Meghasandesa* appeals, in the fulness of his emotion, to the cloud for conveying his doleful message of love to his beloved in the distant city of Alaka. For, according to the poet, true emotion which holds a person in its grip and transforms his whole nature, knows no difference between animate objects imbued with feelings and inanimate Nature. Every human feeling or emotion, when it reaches the glory of its fulness and the acme of its perfection, becomes universalised and forms part of the nature of the Universal Spirit which pervades the whole of creation. The truth of this is well expressed by the *Srimad Bhagavata* when speaking of the universalised soul of Suka. The sage Vyasa called aloud for his son in grief, and the sound reverberated throughout the forest and found its echo in the trees of the forest. The poet, there, views man as the noblest work of God and as part of the same beautiful fabric of Nature, and feels convinced that man's heart beats always in unison with the heart of Nature. Speaking of Sakuntala, the poet says that, though fond of adorning herself with the flowers of creepers, she would desist from doing so on account of her affection for the creepers, lest she should deprive them of their ornamentation. It is this solicitude for her creeper-friends that is responsible for her self-abnegation. A similar feeling impels the saint under the vow of Ahimsa to refrain from plucking with his finger-nails the flowers and tender sprouts of trees and plants. It is the realisation of the essential unity of man with Nature that makes the poet transfer all the feelings, emotions and tastes of man to the objects around and make them animate with life and joy. It is the projection of man's personality, which is one with the personality behind the universe, upon the aspects of Nature. In the *Meghasandesa*, the Yaksha holds out the joy of æsthetic appreciation to the cloud to induce it to make its long pilgrimage to the distant city of Alaka. He, therefore, says that the supreme æsthetic

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joy of appreciating the beauty of the play of moonlight on the balcony of a fine palace, which is denied to the cloud in every other part of the country, is fully available to the cloud if it happens to go to the city of Alaka. The moonlight there can never be hidden by the darkness of the clouds, for it proceeds from the moon on the head of Siva living in the suburbs of the city and not from the moon high up in Heaven. This is the significance in the selection of the city of Alaka as the destination for the cloud in the Poem.

To Nature, 'red in tooth and claw,' however, he was indifferent. For, he saw in her only the beauty, joy and emotions of man. According to him, the truth of the Universe does not lie in the grim aberrations of Nature.

Some Old Indian Art-Crafts

By C. SIVARAMAMURTHY, B.A. (Hons.)

Restricted meanings create tremendous mischief in the sphere of understanding; false associations creep in where no such really exist. And with the advent of these, the entire outlook changes, and confusion and disorder arise. The word 'art' suffers from exactly a similar disease and is generally taken to mean any one of the fine arts as they are commonly understood; and distinctions are drawn first between arts and crafts and then between the so-called 'fine' and 'useful' arts. The absurdity in this division and classification is clearly revealed to us when we consider the real meaning of these words. The words 'art' as well as 'craft' mean 'skill'; the words 'artful' and 'crafty' mean the same thing and connote the idea of cunning which can never be the attribute of a person devoid of skill. Thus we have the skill of a workman in any particular handicraft, meaning art. Again the division between arts into useful and fine is false and mistaken. There can be no art, however fine and attractive it might be, and however much mind and imagination might play in it, that is absolutely useless. Utility cannot and should not be dissociated from the so called fine arts; they are not luxuries as some hold them to be: nor should the so-called useful arts be taken as mere mechanical utilities lacking any element of beauty and artistry. It is this wrong classification that Morris so very much deplores and his lectures, especially that on 'Art and its Producers,' would convince one of the futility of this division.

The Sanskrit word 'silpa' that corresponds to the word 'art' is quite all-embracing and is meant to connote all the arts that involve human skill. There are sixty-four such arts recognised in India and we have an enumeration of all these in the 'Sukranitisara' as also in various other books. The

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word 'etch' being derived from the old High German 'esjan,' 'to cause to eat' as with an acid. This process was first developed by the armourers and jewellers of the 15th century who filled in the incised lines of the elaborate patterns on weapons and ornaments with black paint to make them stand in bold relief, and pieces of paper pressed on them to take prints of these for a better view of the work of ornamentation gave rise to this process of printing of etchings and dry-point plates.. Though no prints were ever taken, (even if taken they would be prints the wrong way), the palm-leaf manuscripts of old India with letters incised on the leaves with the pointed iron style (*Lat-stilus*) were smeared over with black colour (soot) for a better view of the letters, while reading them. We have also pictures drawn on palm leaf attached to the manuscripts and these correspond to dry-point on fibre of today.

The Sanskrit term 'salakalekhya' is used for that art of ancient India that corresponds to modern dry-point, and it was a very popular one too, being given an honoured place in the list of subjects of general study. Trivikrama talks of 'salakalekhana' as practised by even maidens.¹ The 'salaka,' as the very name suggests, is a metal pin or fine rod with a pointed needle used to scratch lines over various surfaces including the surface of smooth walls.² But unfortunately, like the 'patrakartari' even the 'salaka' is merely known by name, the instrument itself having been lost by long disuse. Apart from bold free-hand drawing practised as a matter of course by all housewives and maidens of India, called by various names in various parts of the country as the 'Rangoli' in and around Bombay, as the 'Alpana' in Bengal and the 'Kolam' in South India, there has been in practice what can be called an art corresponding to modern stencilling. Plates of metal, especially of tin, with patterns of various designs

¹Kusala salakalekhyeshu.

Nalachampu, Page 87.

²Yaissarvatra salakayevalikhitairdigbhittayaschitritah.

Nalachampu, Page 87, sl. 35.

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marked by pin-holes through which white or coloured powders were allowed to pass through and settle on the ground, served as the household stencil plates of Indian homes. This is done even today with one or more colours in almost every part of our land.

Under the 'sutra' of Panini, 'Nityam kridajivikayoh,' we have the word 'dantalekhana' given as an example. The compound of 'danta' and 'lekhaka' is possible because the word denotes a profession. The 'dantalekhana' herein stated is taken to mean, as some hold it, a practice in old India of painting the teeth to beautify them. That meaning cannot be impossible since I have myself known cases of Oriyas blackening their teeth and screwing up gold flowers through holes bored through them for the purpose. Rajasekhara talks of the teeth of Bahlika women as red—probably, they were painted, since redness due to 'tambula' is common everywhere and no special country need be named for it.

Apart from this, 'dantalekhana' may be taken to mean painting on ivory, which art has been in existence in India from a very long time. Work in ivory has been going on in India for ages and the earliest date cannot be fixed. Dr. Vincent Smith has this passage in his 'History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon' in which he gives what he considers the earliest reference to ivory work in India: 'There can be no doubt that the art of carving ivory has been practised in India, the house of the elephant, for uncounted ages. For instance, the ancient drama "The Little Clay Cart," composed in the fifth century of the Christian era describes the entrance to Vasantasena's mansion as shining "with its high ivory portal" (Act Four). But I am not in a position to mention a single extant ancient object in ivory of any importance. In modern times many localities are famous for their ivory carving.'¹

It is most unfortunate that dates should be so cheap as to be adjusted according to our own pleasure. The date of Sudraka is generally accepted as prior to Kalidasa, and when

¹*History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, page 372.

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'Amarakosa' gives this definition of 'silpa,'—'Silpam karma kaladikam,' and under the 'Unadisutra,' 'Khashpasilpasashpabashparupaparpatalpah,' we have it given 'Silpam kausalam'; and this gives us exactly the sense of skill involved in both the words art and craft. Dancing, music, sculpture, painting, cookery, garland-making and a host of other practical sciences are included under this head.

Of these various arts the art of paper-cuts, so very popular today and so very often seen in art exhibitions, appears to have been most popular in old India. One of the many arts learnt by the grandees of our land happens to be this. Thus we have 'patracchedana' as one of the arts learnt by Avantisundari and her companions as part of their general education, and it happens to be a 'Vinodasthaṇa.'¹ A knowledge of 'patracchedana,' 'alekhyaka' and 'pustakriya' i.e., paper-cuts, painting, and sculpture or modelling, coupled with an acquaintance with the arts of music and dance, was considered a great asset in those days, and the humorous

¹Kanyaparijanastrinam dadarsa vihritikriyah
Kandukonatribhischarai ratnairapi cha shadvidhaih
Chitradushkaramargosu kridantiraparastriyah
Punchalikadikankelipatrachedyani chaparah
Duryachakani kurvantirashtadasavidhunyapi
Lipibhedumscha sindhvadin kaschinmlechchaksharani cha
Prahelikadika vachah parascha parichinvatih
Sangitagitavadiranyabhyasayantiranekasah
Tasminnavantisundarya dadarsa paricharakah

Avantisundarikatha

Cf. Bharatavisakhiladantilavrikshayurvedachitrasutreshu
Patracchedavidhane bhramakarmani pustasudasastreshu
Atodyavadanavidhau nritte gite cha kausalam tasyah

Kuttanimata

Malati is described as proficient in all those arts.

Cf. Also, Janan patracchedanamalekhyam sikthapustakarmani
Nrittam gitopachitam tantrimurajadivadyabhedamscha

Kuttanimata

Sundarasena knows all these arts.

Cf. Also, Anucharaniva naralakshanadini adheysavikrayani patracched-yadini.

Upamitibhavaprapanchakatha p. 206

Even an allegorical prince like Nandivardhana is proficient in all arts including patracchedana.

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description of Bhattacharya found in the 'Kuttanimata' as trying to display a knowledge of all these which he did not actually possess, shows us all the more clearly how much such knowledge was valued, even to the extent of a fool dabbling in them.

Bhattacharya, the proud and foolish lazy drone of a son of a nobleman, is pictured as holding up in his hand the 'patrakartari' for a mere make-believe, to deceive people into a belief of his knowledge of the art.¹ Of the 'patrakartari' we know very little. It appears to have been the instrument used for cutting 'patra' and, as the name suggests, should have had the form of a pair of scissors. The 'patra' used might have been both leaf and paper, since both were freely used at that time. But the ancient 'patrakartari' has now become as extinct as the old surgical instruments of India whose descriptions and use are given at great length in the medical works like 'Susruta Samhita' and 'Ashtangahrdaya' but remain quite unknown even to the medical world by reason of long disuse.

The intaglio process of engraving designs on gems and metals, which has now taken a new shape in the popular dry-point of today, is an interesting study by itself. Though prints were never taken it can never be denied that all designs cut on all pots, plates, platters, pitchers, jugs, mugs and hosts of other vessels, on seals, inscription-plates and so on, are anything but different from, being analogous to, modern dry-point. In fact, the process of dry-point takes us back to the primitive man who scratched his pictures on pieces of bone and stone.

The importance of dry-point cannot be overrated. Etching is in fact an outcome of dry-point, and the art of biting metal plates with acid was first practised at the beginning of the 16th century in both Germany and Holland, the

¹ Patrachedamajanan janan va kausalam kalavishaye

Prakatayati janasamaje bibhranah patrakartarim satatam. *Kuttanimata*

The commentary says:—Patrachedanam nama kalaviseshah, yena bhurjanapradinam swabhiprayadyotanaya tattadakritya kartanam kriyate.

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some of the jealous late-date fixers persist in clinging to the fifth-century A. D. in spite of Bhau Daji and Mr. Kshettresh-chandra Chattopadhyaya proving the date of the author of the 'Raghuvamsa' as the century before Christ, surely it cannot be conceived how Sudraka could be reckoned as having lived in the fifth century. Further, Dr. Smith forgets the 'Ramayana' which is, by far, older than the ancient book that he cites. The 'Sundarakanda' of the 'Ramayana' opens with a magnificent picture of Lanka with its mansions and palaces. Glowing descriptions of profuse ivory work are not wanting.¹

He however quotes as an earlier evidence the inscription of the Sanchi tope. 'Much earlier is the record at Sanchi of Circa 200 to 150 B. C. which informs us that one of the piers of the southern gate was not only dedicated but executed by the ivory carvers of Bhilsa. "The workers in ivory of Vidisa have done the carving." (Vedikehi danta-karehi rupakarumam katam). This implies that even at a date so early the carvers of ivory were organised as a guild (*Sreni*) Ep. Ind 2, pp 92, 378: Tope I, Inscr No. 200 C. 189.'² How sad it is that the existence or non-existence of ivory carving in ancient India should hang by a thread as it were, on a solitary inscription and its accessibility to Dr. Smith!

Apart from carving in ivory there has been in vogue painting on ivory and this was developed to a high degree in the Mughal period. The medium being a very soft and delicate one, paintings executed on that surface were exquisitely nice and attractive. 'Dantalekhana' might therefore mean even this art of painting in colours on ivory plates.

Under the very 'sutra' of Panini quoted before, the 'Kasika,' an early commentary on the aphorisms, gives another example of a compound of two words meaning a profession,

¹Manisopanavikritam hemajalvirajitam
Sphatikairavritatulam dantaritarupikam

Sundarakanda Can. 9 Sl. 23

²*History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, page 372.

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'Nakhalekhaka.' 'Nakhalekhana' means drawing with the nail. That the nail was used as a 'sringaranga' for painting and drawing 'makara' and other patterns on the body according to the 'patrakekhana' process, is a very well known fact, but there is also another type of nail work done on paper today known only to a very limited number of people. This work is done in the cameo method, and the figure is brought into relief by a dexterous working with the nails on the paper and appears like some embossed print. A fine example of this was executed by an artist friend of mine from Hyderabad, Mr. Pathak, a Maharashtra gentleman well versed in this art, when he tried to do my figure by nail work. 'Nakhalekhana' might have most probably meant this sort of work, since the drawing of 'makara' and other designs with 'gorochana' and 'kasturi' on the body was usually known by a special name 'patrabhangalekhana.'

The arts of India are not so few as to be exhausted in a short note like this; and it would indeed be preposterous if one were to attempt a detailed and exhaustive enumeration of all these. It has been however attempted to give a few of the most popular arts in old India that go to make up the 'Vinodasthana' of the gentlemen of the land, and practised as a rule by one and all as a part of a liberal general education.

Sonnet

Live thou each day as though it were the last,
Since every single day that comes and goes
Is but a beautiful ascetic rose
Born bravely twixt the future and the past,
Dim desert stretches, solitary, vast,
Unknown, forgotten, huge with dark repose :
For thee today has blossomed, and— who knows ?
Thou mayst tomorrow in deep earth be cast.

Each moment is a burning-point between
Two long eternities, two mournful greys,
Two terrible solitudes of the Unseen
That broods amidst the passing of our days,
Between the still to be and what has been,
Blind travellers, we go our separate ways.

Vikarabad, 17th Sept. '31.

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

Optimism

I will have better days again :
The dawn between the trembling boughs
Will end this lonesome night of pain
And grow familiar in my house.
I will have better days ere long
When I will break to sudden bloom,
And I will break to sudden song
Out of the silence and the gloom.
I know that I will soon arise
Out of this long unhappy night
When in my hands and mouth and eyes
There will be power and love and light.
But if out of this world of men
I slip and pass on death's lone ways
Robed in the flowerless dust,—why then,—
I surely will have better days !

Vikarabad, 17th Sept. '31.

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

To an Irish Poet

Thy quiet wisdom, like the antler-moss,
Forms a green triad in my memory.
Imbas forosna,—knowledge that illumines
All its adventures; things half-said, and so
The dearer; poems that lead the spirit forth
From the bonds of understanding. Three rich thoughts
Close to my fingers clambering up the rocks
Of the new mountain-life that wakes the joy
Of my most ancient spirit,—antlered moss
Beneath grave cedars, taller than the masts
Of long-forgotten argosies, the beams
That sway against earth-tremors down the depth
Of grim pagodas built in every region
Of long-brooding Japan. Wisdom and sorrow
Moving to their slow fulness, in their train
Bring noble compensation, little things
That glow with infinite wistfulness, that are
Rare tidings to the soul.

E. E. SPEIGHT

The Andhra Ploughman

A wooden plough, a brown rug, and a net,
Covering a shining body dark as jet,
Mere bone and sinew, trudging home to sleep
On cowdung floor, a weary, bundled heap.

Yet go his dreams, per chance, to old Lagash,
Left when his venturous forbears took the seas :
And some dull feeling starts again the lash
On those proud towers and lordly terraces.

Of such a race was Adam, doctors say,
And his great sons, Sumeria's ancient Kings ;
And watching him I wonder at the way
Mankind has wandered since those far-off things.

E. E. SPEIGHT

Shrimati Hutheesing: A Daughter of the Dawn

By G. VENKATACHALAM

I first heard of her, while alighting from my train at Bolepur on my way to Santiniketan. 'Have you ever met Shrimati?' asked an artist pupil of Tagore who came to receive me at the station. During my brief stay of two days I had glimpses of her. Nandalal Bose, her art-master, was full of her praises. She was, I found, the pet of the Poet and a favourite of all. She was from Gujerat, the first girl to visit Santiniketan as an artist-pupil from that 'province', (though today half the students of Kalabhavan are boys and girls from Gujerat and Kathiawar), and she enjoyed certain privileges. Shrimati was the best dressed young lady in the compound and easily the most beautiful looking. She moved about the place like a Kangra miniature come to life. Hers is not a common type of beauty but rather a classic one: face like that of the Madonna, eyes large and dreamy as those of Ajanta. Shrimati was studying painting under Nanda Babu, music under Dina Babu, and dancing under Nabhab Kumar, and she was showing great progress and much promise in all these arts.

This was nearly a decade ago. Since then she has blossomed into one of India's foremost dancers and is making a name for herself as an artist of rare genius. She has travelled widely both in India and in Europe, studying, sketching, dancing, enriching her mind and arts. She went 'afoot' through the Himalayas for a while, and later visited the *salons* in Paris and Berlin, eager to see, learn and understand. 'Who is this Miss Hutheesing, a dancer from India?' wrote a friend from Europe. Returning to India she started giving dance-recitals on her own. Rabindranath Tagore felt proud of his pupil and encouraged

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her to interpret some of his poems in her own way, and she delighted him with her dances. Thus was born 'The Spirit of Rhythm,' one of Shrimati's favourite dance compositions. To Rabindranath she is the best exponent of Indian dancing and he is never tired of singing her praises. Calcutta welcomed her heartily when she gave her first public show in that city; Colombo applauded her art to the skies; Madras and Bangalore opened their eyes to a new vision of dance-art.

Dancing is not a mere matter of mastering the technique or blindly conforming to traditional forms; it is the joyous expression of life's moods, passions, aspirations and anguishes. It is not a vocation or a hobby but the life-throb of sensitive souls, the creative expression of the surging life within. Rhythm is the basis of life, as it is of the universe, and this law of rhythm is behind all manifestation, behind all Nature's phenomena, behind all creative arts. Indian dancing, as a science and an art, is based and built upon this inner rhythmic significance of forms. Its motifs are highly conventionalised, and their mastery is a matter of years of devoted learning and practice. In its present decadent state it is all science and no art; all form and no life; all tradition and no creation. But fortunately there is a tendency today for more freedom of expression and for more creative compositions, and it is here dancers like Shrimati, Menaka, Uday Shankar, Rukmini, Jamuna, Nandita, Ghosh and others can give the necessary lead and save Indian art from a tradition that has lost its soul. Of course, there is a danger in this as well, but every born artist, like Shrimati, is so attuned to rhythm that she could not feel, think or express herself otherwise than rhythmically, and that is what distinguishes a born dancer from a spurious one.

Shrimati may not have, in fact has not, any profound knowledge of the theory of Indian dancing, but she is, being an artist, no stranger to the *Rasas* and *Bhavas* inherent in the art itself. She lives these moods while Pundits only talk about them. To her the birth-pangs of love, the pain of separation, the joy of freedom, the agony of captivity, the

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frustrated hopes and unfulfilled desires are not so many mental imageries, like the flight of the birds or babbling brooks, but part of emotional experiences which ever feed and nourish her artistic expressions. Shrimati is one of the most representative of modern Indian dancers, and her art is a treat of the rarest kind. An artist to her finger-tips, a dancer to the very core of her being, she creates magical moods with her genius. You see them not only in the rhythm of her dances but also in the atmosphere of her productions.

Nothing tinsel or tawdry about her art. Everything is genuinely beautiful. Her costumes, ornaments, background and accompaniments are not just stage accoutrements to deceive the eye but objects of art that ought to and should surround one's daily life. The settings, with their simple coloured cloths and embroidered Sind and Cutch works, cannot be improved upon or more beautified by costly mechanical contrivances or gaudily painted screens and curtains. The costumes and draperies are creations of a cultured artist, and she has shown how to create chaste, simple, beautiful backgrounds for stage performances. It is in these little details that you discover her true genius.

Her dances are visions of rhythm, grace, beauty, poise and movement. Her body, supple like a tender willow, sways and moves from a centre deep within her and the musical accompaniments merely give the time-beat and the melody-setting. She does not dance to music; music keeps time to the rhythmic beat of her soul. And this is the secret of all great dancers. It is not enough to possess a supple and sensitive body and a mastery over technique, but the soul of the artist must be aflame with the fire of life. A Pavlova cannot be produced in a studio; she is born. Shrimati shares this great soul-quality with that incomparable dancer who had the world at her feet.

Shrimati's dances include simple folk-dances like the Garba Pot Dance and classical dances like the Kathak. 'Devotee' is a beautiful rendering of a type of Manipuri dance which the Tagore Players have made popular through-

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out India. In 'Bondage' and 'Freedom' we see other moods of Shrimati and her versatility. Some of these dances are strictly conventional and follow traditional forms, and others are original compositions inspired by the mood and the theme. Her latest creation is an interpretation of Nataraja's dance inspired by that famous bronze.

Shrimati is strangely modern and ancient; sensuous and spiritual. Intensely practical and business-like, she is yet dreamy and other-worldly. In her attitude, outlook, behaviour, culture, she is a modern among the moderns, but has withal all the gracious charm and tender gentleness of the old world, and reminds one of those bewitching women created and immortalised on the walls of Ajanta by the unknown masters of ancient India.

The Poetry of Kamini Roy

By KALIPADA MUKHERJEE, M.A.

One of the Bengali poetesses whose work is likely to survive is Mrs. Kamini Roy¹ who died at the age of sixty-nine, on September 27, 1933. She was born in 1864 at Basanda in the district of Backergunj; and was a daughter of Chandicharan Sen who was a writer of some reputation himself, being the author of a Bengali rendering of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' and of a novel 'Ajodhyar Begum' or 'The Begum of Oudh.' She was one of the earliest of Bengali ladies to become a graduate of the Calcutta University: she graduated with Honours in Sanskrit in 1886. She received her early training from her father, a man of character who had become a Brahmo in 1870. Even as a girl she had begun to write poetry. Her early poems had remained unpublished for long, until these attracted the notice of Hem Chandra Banerjee, one of the greatest of Bengali poets. These poems, collectively called 'Alo O Chhaya' (Light and Shade), Hem Chandra extolled to the skies, and advised their author to have them published. The young poetess requested Hem Chandra for an introduction, and the

¹ Mrs. Roy was well-known in Bengal not only for her work as a poetess, but also for her social service, and her great love for her country and womankind. All these varied aspects of her life are expressed in her poetry. After her marriage she practically ceased to write poetry, and when asked the reason, pointed to her children and said, 'These are my living poems.' After graduating she worked for some time as a mistress in the Bethune Collegiate School and later was appointed a Lecturer in the Bethune College, Calcutta. She was a champion of women's rights and in 1923 she headed the Deputation that waited on Lord Lytton, then Viceroy, for the removal of sex-disqualification for the purposes of election to the (then) Calcutta Municipality. And, in 1930, when the Labour Commission came out to India to enquire into the conditions of the labouring classes, the Government of Bengal secured her services as an assessor to make the Commissioners acquainted with the grievances of the women workers of Bengal. One of her brothers, Mr. Nisith Sen, is a well-known Advocate of the Calcutta High Court; and Mr. S. N. Roy, C. I. E., I. C. S., Additional Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Political and Appointment Departments, is one of her step-sons.

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famous poet wrote : 'These poems have impressed me very greatly; in places they are so very sweet and so full of deep thoughts that one's heart is charmed directly one reads them.....I have praised their authoress at heart when reading them myself. And, to be candid, I have even envied her at times.' This was in 1889, when the poetess was twenty-five years of age, and when Rabindranath Tagore had not yet become famous as a writer in Bengal. She had already passed her Entrance Examination at the age of sixteen, and her B.A. at twenty. Most of the poems, however, were written many years before the one of publication. And this, her first publication, with the above-mentioned introduction from the pen of Hem Chandra, made her famous in a day.

Most of the poems of 'Alo O Chhaya' which are sixty-one in number,—including a quintette on Love and two longer but exquisite poems in blank verse 'Mahasweta' and 'Pundarika' both based on the 'Kadambari' of Bana-batta,—were conceived in an autobiographical vein. Sweetness of lyric measures, a beautiful mode of expressing poetical thought, an elusive gracefulness, the first hopes of early youth and its doubts, desires that were great and lovely at the same time, love of country and of God, sympathy for fallen humanity, love of Nature, and the early experience of growing womanhood, combined to make it a unique contribution to Bengali poetry. These are the things which had made the poems of the collection instantaneously popular and captivated readers, some of the most famous of whom gave expression to their feelings of the time when they first had read them, at the time of the death of the poetess. Even Sir P. C. Ray the eminent scientist is reported to have said : 'I do not like to say more than this, that even at this old age of mine the poems of 'Alo O Chhaya' remain imprinted on my heart.' Another Bengali poet, the late Devendranath Sen, eulogised the book as unique in the field of Bengali literature. And Dr. Brajendranath Seal wrote in this 'New Essays in Criticism' (1903) : 'It is a work of great talent and greater promise, and is of unique interest

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as carrying one of the three elements of the neo-Romantic poesy further than any other Bengali poem. In point of natural magic, a transfiguration of the subjective egoism, the lyrics are nowhere beside Babu Rabindranath Tagore's 'Songs of Sunset,' and as regards the creative imagination, unfolding deathless visions of sublimity or beauty, the finely imaginative pieces of this volume, 'Mahasweta,' 'Pundarika' and 'Chandrapida's Awakening' are eclipsed in the blaze of 'Valmikir Jaya' (M. M. Haraprasad Shastri) and the 'Sarada Mangala' (Beharlal Chakravarty). But in the other element, the objective criticism of life, the previous poems are meagre beside Miss Sen's poetry.¹

The late Mr. Roby Datta remarked in a note in his 'Echoes from East and West' that Mrs. Roy's 'L'Allegro' comes after her 'Il Pensero.' 'The very first poem in Mrs. Roy's 'Light and Shade' is 'In the Gloom'; but the very next one shows her 'In the Light.' This duality of mood is peculiar to her temperament.' This is why the book begins with the poem 'In the Gloom' which is as follows:—

Creatures we are of gloom !
In gloom awhile we play,
In gloom doth melt away
The mart of life and bloom.
.....
There, thro' the gloomy wood,
A dim, dark ray is seen ;
Who knows whence it hath been ?
Its beauty who hath view'd ?
As long as life may stay,
Since certain is the doom
That we must move thro' gloom,
O seek and chase the ray.
.....
Amid this solemn gloom,
Seek we and follow we
The little light we see ;
Therein we'll play, O come.²

¹The maiden name of Mrs. Roy was Miss Kamini Sen.

²'Echoes from East & West'—Roby Datta.

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It is followed by one on 'Light' in which we find the poetess singing,

Children we are of light ;
O what a concourse bright !
In light we sleep and wake,
And life's carousal take.

Amid this splendid light
No more we lose our sight,
No more we wander blind
Where we the path can find.¹

We should like to give here the renderings of some of the headings of the poems, so that the reader can form an estimate of the contents of this first book by Mrs. Roy. These are, The Quest after Happiness, Sorrow, Renunciation, Lest Some should say Something or Moral Cowardice,² New Year's Eve, Destiny, The Pole-Star, The Dream of Youth, Hope's Enchantment, Farewell, Asunder, In Abraham's Bosom, The Mother's Call, The Uninvited, A three Years' Child, Where?, The Question, The Inner Soul of Beauty, The Days Fly, The Awakening, In Silence, Nirvan, The Dream of Hope, The Story of a Widow, The Girl and the Star, The Marriage of Krishnakumari, Desire, Pain in Love, The History of Love, The Awakening of Chandrapid, The Voice of Woman, and The Disappointed.³

Some of the poems are tintured with the youthful pessimism of the poet,—she felt lonely and she expressed her sense of loneliness in more poems than one, like Mrs. Browning who wrote,

Oh my God,
Thou hast knowledge, only Thou.
How dreary 'tis for women to sit still
On winter nights by solitary fires
And hear the nations praising them far off.

¹ 'Echoes from East and West'—Roby Datta.

² A popular poem included in Secondary School text-books.

³ It reminds one of Moore's 'Light of other days.'

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But, in some other poems also, we find the authoress struggling out of pessimism into optimism, as in her poem 'The Broken Soul.' But her self-revelation is in 'Sukh' or 'Happiness,' which has been rendered by Roby Datta as 'From Gopa to the Buddha' in 'Echoes from East and West,' in a footnote to which he says, 'Here we get an insight into the mind of the poetess.' The names Gopa and Goutam are the insertions of the translator, so also are the five opening couplets of the last stanza.

Yet, the most significant thing about these exquisite poems of Mrs. Roy is their revealed femininity. In this respect she stands side by side with a more modern poetess, Laurence Hope, who wrote,

Your beauty puts a barb into my soul,
Strive as I will it never lets me go ;
My love has passed the frontiers of control,
You are so fair and I desire you so.

Others may come and go, they are to me
But changing mirage, transient, untrue,
My faithlessness is but fidelity
Since I am never faithful but to you.

.....

Yet is your beauty so divine a thing,
So irreplaceable, so haunting sweet
Against all reason, I am fain to fling
My life, my youth, myself, beneath your feet.

In a poem called 'Joubana Tapasya' (The Penance for Youth) the poetess calls upon Time not to take away her youth, the prime of her life, as she cannot bear the idea of a life without the freshness of youth. She said therefore that she would undertake a long penance for the preservation of life-long youth—youth that would not be possible for even Time to deprive her of. It was indeed this life-long craving for youthfulness that gives her poems a peculiar sadness and also a unique sweetness.

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Man says that the mind of woman remains inscrutable to him, but woman fears that man looks down on the mind of woman. There is for ever a difference in the angle of vision of the sexes. This she has revealed with a force and frankness which can again be compared with that of Laurence Hope who has written,

Rarely men understand our way of love,
How that to women in their wedding hours
Lover and priest and king are blent in one,
Hence the awed worship of these hearts of ours.

At times love for a little lifts the veil,
And men and women see each other's heart,
But swiftly passion comes, obscuring all,
And thus the nearing souls are swept apart.

To us love is a sacred rite ; to man
Custom, perhaps affection, or desire.
Before we hold our lovers in our arms
They are too fiercely amorous to inquire.

The sacred ideal of love in the heart of a woman she reveals in a poem of extreme beauty, in 'What is That?' The trend of thought which delights in giving expression to ideas about love is to be found in some poems of her second book of poems 'Malya O Nirmalya' (The Garland and The Remains of Offerings to the Deity), a collection of as many as one hundred and ten poems, and by some regarded as a greater achievement than her first book. It is interesting to see that the poetess gives in detail the story of a man in love in orthodox Bengali society, his final disappointment in life, and of the consequent sorrow, in 'Nothing in Particular.' This may be read with 'A Loving Conversation of a newly wedded Bengali Couple' in 'Manasi,' in which Tagore has very humorously denounced child-marriage.

'Alo O Chhaya' contains, as I have already said, two bigger poems, 'Mahasweta' and 'Pundarika.' Both these, like 'Vaisampayana' and 'The Awakening of Chandrapid,' are based on the 'Kadambari' of Banabhatta. But these

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adaptations of Mrs. Roy have a peculiar charm of their own. These are as graceful in descriptions of natural scenery as in the delineation of the budding soul in love. And their blank verse is admirable, full of an elusive grace and such as can come only from the pen of a female poet of fine sensibility.

'Alo O Chhaya' is important in other respects too. It contains three poems, 'The Dream of Hope,' 'Mother Mine,' and 'The Voice of Woman' which all reveal the poetess's great love of country, and of ancient India with her greatness and high ideals of life. In 'Mother Mine' her song rises like the following hymn about New Jerusalem :—

For thee, O dear, dear country,
Mine eyes their vigils keep ;
For very love, beholding
Thy happy name, they weep.

The mention of thy glory
Is unction to the breast
And medicine in sickness,
And love, and life and rest.¹

It may be compared with Rabindranath's,

"Tis for thee, O mother mine,
My limbs I throw away ;
'Tis for thee, O mother mine,
My life adown I lay.

'Malya O Nirmalya,' Mrs. Roy's second book, published in 1320 B. S. (1913), is full of the pathos of life and testifies to the truth of,

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

In it the ideas of the poetess are fuller, and more mature in expression than in her first book. This book has been dedicated to God, a fact testifying to the godliness of the poetess. In a poem 'Ashirbad' (Blessing), which was composed in October, 1891, she has sung of her own ideals in

¹ By Bernard of Morlaix, 1140; Tr. by J. M. Neale, 1851.

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life. This forms the theme of another poem 'The Poet's Desire.' She is wide awake to the ideal of service and believes with Robert Browning that

All service ranks the same with God,
.....there is no last, nor first.

In a poem 'In a Half-Sleep' the poetess has given us a spiritual poem of a very high order, which is entirely personal too. This book contains many love-poems among which 'Pariksha' or 'Trial' reminds one of Mrs. Browning's 'Rhyme of the Duchess May' and Lord Tennyson's 'The Lord of Burleigh.' 'Love to Genius' is on love which is particularly unselfish; while 'Hisab' or 'Reckoning' puts us in mind of Mrs. Browning's 'Courtship of Lady Geraldine.' These poems are, however, original in their own way, and cannot be said to be imitations of the poems named with them.

In 1899, Mrs. Roy published her 'Pouraniki' or 'Poems on Legendary Subjects.' Amongst the poems in this book are, 'Drona to Dhristadyumna,' 'Ahalya to Rama,' and other pathetic poems that will ever please. This book of poems may be said to have closed a part of the poetess's poetical career.

From 1900, storms of grief began to blow and blast the soul of the poetess. One of her children died in the same year. In 1908, died her husband K. N. Roy, I.C.S., who, being charmed with her poetical accomplishments, had married her after the death of his first wife. Her eldest son Ashoka died in 1913; and her grown-up daughter Leela died of consumption the same year. These griefs well-nigh benumbed the poetess. The sad sense of bereavement for her eldest son she latterly expressed in 'Ashoka-Sangita' (Songs to Ashoka.) And 'Jibaner Pathe' (On the Path of Life) is her 'In Memoriam' enshrining her grief at the death of her husband.

In 1915, Mrs. Roy published her poetic drama 'Aimba' which she had written as early as 1891. This is an episode from the Mahabharata, but differently treated. It has been

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staged successfully by school and college students. The heroic visage of Amba inspired the poetess to write a drama on her.

'Deep O Dhup' (The Lamp and Incense) consists of poems written during many years, and reveal the inward religious nature of the poetess. These reveal a sadness born of past experience; but it is religious faith that bears her up under deep depression. The poetess here gives vent to her patriotism in many poems. In 'On the Path of Immortality' she expresses her kinship with the lowliest in Indian society. She expresses her resolve to make herself free from the trammels of a life of ease, only to make it worthy of action for the alleviation of the sufferings of humanity, and for unbinding the fetters which bind her country. In some poems she deals with contemporary political events, in India. 'The Song of Awakening,' 'The New Awakening,' 'The Cry of the Weak,' 'Let Him be Victorious,' 'The Liberated Prisoner,' 'The Satyagrahi,' 'Regarding Tarakeswar,' and such other poems are full of patriotic fervour. In 'If they Awake' she sounds the same note which is being sounded by Mahatma Gandhi as a champion of the cause of the untouchables. She gives expression to her naive sense of humour in 'The Letter of the Grandmother,' 'The Reply of the Granddaughter' and 'The Reply of the Grand-daughter-in-law.' And she becomes exquisitely pathetic in 'In the Mud of the Pond,' and in 'The River it is that makes me say.'

But more beautiful and more exquisite self-revelation comes in 'On the Path of Life' which can be rightly styled her domestic and spiritual autobiography. This is a book of poems of the same kind and of the same rank as 'La Vita Nuova' of Dante, 'The House of Life' by D. G. Rossetti, 'The Sonnets from the Portuguese' of Mrs. Browning and 'Monna Innominata' of Christina Rossetti. This is a sonnet-sequence, and is divided into three sections,— 'Companionship,' 'Alone,' and the 'Fallen Flower.' The first section contains poems dealing with the maiden-

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hood of the poetess, her life with its hopes and fears, as it was before her marriage. In such sonnets as the following she gives expression to the recollection of her life as a maiden :—

Afar I dwelt, and you to bring me near,
Dared even death. What was the wizardry
That made you see a goddess' aureole here
About the brow of a woman such as I ?
And all unasked you lavished at my feet
The treasure that was yours. High on the height
I lived, my heart like ice.—To the valley sweet
You brought me down, and chill and hard and white
I am no more. Your love has thawed my soul,
Melting it drop by drop. O love, slake
Your thirst, with this my cup be satisfied.
.....O let me hide
Within the sanctuary of thy heart.
But if the spell dissolve and your love fly,
What resting place in all the world have I ?¹

I do not mean that the above lines were inspired by Tennyson, but the reader when reading them will be strongly reminded of the following lines from Tennyson's 'Princess':

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height :
What pleasure lives in height (the Shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills ?
.....
And come, for love is of the valley, come,
For love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him.....

The poetess, as in the above poem, still doubted the constancy of her lover and remained unmoved ; but he still came,—

You said—"Yes, I have come again for you.
The more repelled, the closer am I drawn.
Hope, like the daily dark-dispelling dawn,

¹ This and all the following renderings of Mrs. Roy's poems are from 'Sonnets from the Bengali' by Mrs. Jessie Duncan Westbrook. *The Modern Review*, November, 1929.

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After each disappointment wakes anew.
Look round and see what light, what sound, the play
Of the waves of life,—how beautiful it seems.
Who would remain stricken by sorrowful dreams
With wilful eyes close shut when all is day ?
Come, let us walk together in this light,
Our perfect life's fulfilment to attain.'

.....

Yet she would not listen, for,

Both day and night, I walk in dreams, I said,
A twilight world, nor dark nor bright is mine.
With longings undefined my heart is fed,
Dimly a hundred hopes within it shine,
As gleam the small stars in the evening sky,
Seeking an everlasting refuge there.

.....

Such love you ask for—is it mine to give,
Your thirst to quench, your fever to allay ?
Could we pursue together while we live,
Doubting and fearing not, the self-same way ?
And if your heart's desire be thus fulfilled,
Would not new longings rise again unstilled ?

But her lover would put a stop to all her questionings by asking her to trust in his love, because he said,—

Your love is the only goal of my desires.
Rejected I still urge my bitter need.

This at last set at rest all her doubts, and she could not but give herself up to his love : and she said,—

Let this your love lovely and fruitful be.

She added,

Burdened with ill
And heavy load of pain, a woman halts
Weary through life; but heaviest she bears
The burden of herself. O lift this load
And help me.

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Her lover wants to question her again ; but she refuses to be disturbed with questions, as she wants all thoughts of the past and the future to be banished from her mind and also because she believed,

Safe in the heaven of your arms is peace.

This all-sufficing and all-confiding love was to suffer a rude shock at some future time in the life of the poetess, and she sings,—

Hand still clasps hand, but soon unheeding drops,
The *Malati* garlands lose their fragrant air,
The song I sang sudden unfinished stops.
Look in my eyes, the clouds are gathering there,
My heart feels it will break. Is this the end
Of all my dreams, or but an evil one
That yet may pass ?

She, in utter bewilderment, asks,—

Is my spring-time done ?
What place is this, what time, and who are we
Who sit side by side ? By what strange ways
Have we been faring ? Did fatality
Lead you astray ? Where searches now your gaze ?

She feels greatly perturbed at the fickleness of love,—

Alone, my dark self-questionings never cease.
Is this love's way—to swell and overflow
And then to move indifferent and slow ?

And she asks,

Is it impossible that love and peace
And joy in work together ever dwell ?

Yet, she will go hand in hand, for she says,—

.....Let pity be the band
That holds us each to each.....
.....
Let us two frightened hearts, clasped as in love,
Fight with our fears.....

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She becomes great with the greatness of self-effacement
and self-abnegation,—

Let love go and let joy forsake our lives,
Let hope be shattered and in fragments hurled,
But memory knows no death it still survives,
Let us not drift afar in this cold world.

Then death comes and intervenes and takes her companion in life away to the other world ; and she remains all alone behind. But she does not feel the pain of separation, for she knows that her marriage is endless matrimony and she believes that her beloved is always with her, though now removed from the field of human experience and the phenomenal world.

'On the Path of Life' is in its own way a great book, and is one of the greatest of sonnet-sequences written on love. Its diction is faultless and its metre, following the Petrarchian model, may rank with the noblest efforts of that great but dangerous form. It reveals also that

Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
"Tis woman's whole existence.¹

In her life-time Mrs. Roy was regarded as the greatest of Bengali poetesses, though some might maintain Mrs. Mankumari Bose's claim to the highest rank among them, as Mrs. Roy falls short of Mrs. Bose, the writer of an epic poem, 'Beerkumar-badh' or the 'Slaughter of Abhimanyu,' in the power of conceiving and giving shape to a poem of great bulk. But whatever may be the opinion of some, most will certainly admit that Mrs. Roy has no superior among Bengali poetesses.

The death of Mrs. Roy, though at the age of sixty-nine, is a distinct loss to Bengali poetry ; for had she lived longer she could have presented it with more works that would endure. At her age her powers remained undiminished ; and she identified herself, with the ardour of youth, with many

¹ Byron, *Donna Julia*.

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social and humanitarian activities. Her poetical work is of rare value. This will give her a rank in Bengali literature with the best of our poets; and, though herself free from all blemishes of form and metre, with Mrs. Browning in English, for, like her, she was pure in sentiment and generous at heart. Her sincerity too was unquestionable; and she had 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.'¹ Like that of Mrs. Browning, her yearning heart said to her lover,—

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only.....
A creature might forget to weep who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby !
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayest love on, through love's eternity.

¹ 1. Pet. iii, 4.

Browning and His Fugitive Vision

By KRISHNA KRIPTALANI

It is possible to appreciate Browning without either dubbing him 'a metaphysician' or likening him to a Vedic Rishi, although it may be true that his intellect often indulged in the gymnastics of the former and his vision captured the experience of the latter. And yet Browning was too much of a poet to rationalise before he believed and, perhaps, too much of a poet too to realize, that is, live through it as an enduring experience, what he felt as a fleeting ecstasy. Being too much in love with life, he could not lose himself in Eternity but would be content to accept the experience of 'instants' as its evidence. It is these 'instants' that give us a clue to his Vision of Being which is felt as a poet and not realized as a Yogi. Many of us—common folk—may have felt the same at rare moments, though, perhaps, not so intensely.

For there are moods in human experience when all thinking is submerged in a deep surge of elevated consciousness. There is felt an expansion of the heart that finds no limit, as though the entire universe is contained in its infinite embrace; or rather, the individuality is so strangely rarefied that it seems to be absorbed into all that is within and without us, and yet be itself.

The state is not one of mental blankness: much less of mental torpor. It is as though an intense but unknown yearning, that cannot define its object, suddenly felt the rapture of fulfilment in its own immensity, and expanded and spread 'till flesh must fade for heaven was here.' It is a flood of consciousness as elusive as it is overwhelming,—a consciousness that in swaying seems to sublimate one's being. It is as though while wondering at the vastness of an ocean you suddenly became one of its silvery waves, and, rising and

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falling with its heaving breast, you felt you were the ocean itself. Or, losing yourself in the ecstasy of a song, you became the song itself and, floating on the waves of the atmosphere, you struck against the rhythm of every being's being. Would we not cherish the 'instant made eternity'?

Though all conscious thinking has ceased, there is present, nevertheless, an undercurrent of mental realization slowly rising to the surface. One suspects that it was while floating in such a beatific blue that the mystic vision of life swam into Browning's ken. For in that vision reality and fantasy, hope and fear, joy and sorrow, shed off their mutual repugnance and, dancing in an harmonious whole, appear like the soft hues of a rainbow,—refractions of a light that is without colour or form. The broken arcs have gathered into a perfect round. God and Satan seem the same self. For Satan is only God in a fancy dress, given a separate entity by man to stimulate and appease his own ethical prejudice. It acts like the magic mask of the primitive man and serves its purpose by frightening people into settled grooves of accepted ethics.

'But, alas for the rarity of life's charity! The consciousness flows away as irresistibly as it flowed in, leaving behind only a vibration. The faint memory lingers, if only to give a new direction to Browning's thinking. But the idea without realization is like doing the steps of a Tango, after the music has ceased. Intellectual conception may remain, but the heart, for a while, seems to discern nothing but 'the infinite passion and the pain of finite hearts that yearn.' The echo keeps vibrating but the song of Pippa is heard only on New Year's Day.¹

¹ All apologies to Sigmund Freud who, while admitting that the 'oceanic' feeling exists in many people, is disposed to relate it to an early stage in ego-feeling, and which later on seeks 'to reinstate limitless narcissism.' *Civilisation and its Troubles*, by Sigmund Freud.

Travancore, the Beautiful

By N. K. VENKATESWARAN

Nobody that came to Travancore ever went without leaving some praise behind. It is the praise of beauty quietly tendered. There is grandeur in the Himalayas, vastness in the Gangetic Plain, blended variety in Central India, intermittent effects in Hyderabad, some gorgeous pomp of Nature in Mysore, but the tranquil beauties of Travancore are nowhere else to be seen. I am assailed by a swarm of images when I think what to call Travancore, but some who have been before me have called it the garden of India and I have no quarrel except to say that first of all it is Nature's own pleasure-garden.

It is a new world the traveller finds when he passes from Tamilnad into Kerala : and of the three divisions of Kerala, Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar, Travancore is not only the largest but also the loveliest. There is a certain pallor in the contexture of features in British Malabar, and while Cochin is undoubtedly pretty Travancore is both fresh and fair.

Those who live all their lives in Travancore can never know how beautiful is their country, and those who have never been to it can scarce think. It was only after I had gone out 'to see the world' and returned that I realised. Then it was that the State seemed to me, for the first time, mantled in a modest glory that I had never seen anywhere else. Then it was the freshness, the softness, the pure loveliness, of things and prospects that everywhere encircle one in this country began to breathe a spell upon my mind and fill my eyes with their own coy felicity. In fact, it was as if I had awaked one morning to find Travancore famous and I was the more rejoiced because in some half real, half imaginative way I myself seemed to share in this fame that had lain hidden so long and come to light so suddenly.

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You may go where you like in Travancore, you will not come upon one small patch of land that you could call drab or commonplace. And if you think of the country as a whole, the picture that rises in your mind is that of a fairyland bathed by silvery showers and fertilised by sparkling streams, perpetually clothed in emerald green and studded with innumerable kinds of plants and trees crowned with masses of leaves and blessed with clustering bouquets and garlands of fruits. From the hazy ramparts of the Western Ghats, from which here and there the blue dome of the sky is pierced by pinnacles and spires, in the east, to the sapphire sea clambering up the shores, sprinkling its milk-white foam on the sands, in the west; from Cochin State in the north, where the cocoanut-palms obliterate the political frontier, to Cape Comorin in the south, where the oceans gather and India ends in a classic conjunction of land and water, which is Travancore, there is a coolness and greenness everywhere, even in the hottest months, wooing you to linger and refresh yourself. If you like you may think Travancore a mild season of spring beautifully nestled between the sea and hills, but if you don't, you can yet have no doubt that it is one of the most comforting countries in the world.

I have almost said that there is no break in the beauty of Travancore, that it is a single picture, that, in short, it acts chiefly on one's mind by the sum of its charms. Yet, in spite of its singular harmoniousness of beauty, you are not sure as you flit from place to place in this unique garden-State, like a bird among the aeries of a tree in full life, that it has not many beauties in its flowing oneness of beauty to be felt and enjoyed one after another. Among these, first and foremost, are the backwaters of Travancore.

These backwaters, sprung from the struggle between land and sea, unfold themselves like liquid music from the northern borders of Lower Travancore to within a few miles of Trivandrum, covering a length of about 150 miles. The Arabian Sea heaves alongside, while they slumber and dream under mellow moons and silent starry skies. Forests of

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cocoanut-palms arise from their banks and roll away inland in tumbling waves of green as far as the eye can see. The total extent occupied by these 'inland seas' is 160 square miles and the largest of them is the 'Vembanad Kayal,' 52 miles long and nearly 10 miles broad. The 'Ashtamudi Kayal,' the eight-pronged lake in the Quilon District, which has been called the Loch Lomond of Travancore, is a sparkling gem set in green tresses of vegetation. It must not be imagined, however, that the backwaters are merely geographical ornaments, for without them the cocoanut-palms cannot flourish and without the cocoanut-palms Travancore should never have possessed the distinctive flavour of prosperity so generally associated with the State. They provide, too, a network of very useful and very beautiful water-roads, open and unfettered as the sea and yet immune from its perils.

The backwaters are an 'intrusion' in the original physical features of Malabar. Once they were all a part of the sea. Malabar is one of the heaviest rain-belts of India and its rivers, surcharged with the loose soil of the land, have been pushing back the waves of the sea by invisible degrees. It is almost a scientific certainty that there are even rivers running underground to the sea between Cochin and Quilon, the principal region of the backwaters. The sea, however, has receded only in part although the rivers have thrown up new shores to mark the extent of their advance into it. It is the shallow and quiet patches of sea lying behind these outposts of land that are called the backwaters of Travancore.

In few other bodies of water, running or still, is there more soothing beauty than in these backwaters. They look like the limpid floor of the sky and allay the troubled spirit like a wandering cloud. They shine gently by day and shimmer under the stars, and if the weather is fair they become an azure half-hidden glow. Only when the monsoon loses its temper or a seawind howls through the land, there occurs a disturbance in their habitual tranquillity.

A 'cruise' on the backwaters in a country-barge is about the most enjoyable thing there is to be had in all India. The

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craft is an object lesson to the vanities of haste and speed. It moves without any of the familiar accompaniments of movement. It sleeps and moves and puts you by and by to sleep by the charm of its quiet example. In it you are in a floating nest and, if waking, you keep looking out at the glorious panorama of green cocoanut-palms which everywhere surround you as if in an affectionate gesture of embrace. Time has no use for the sailor in these waters. It stands still and meaningless. And he enjoys the happiest of all illusions, that he comes from nowhere and goes to nowhere and that he is at last out of the reach of the fever and fret of life. The backwaters are a dream in the sleeping beauties of land and water.

It would take me long were I to describe the array of single beautiful places and scenes like Varkala by the sea between Trivandrum and Quilon, where the land ends in a cliff reminding you of that which is conjured up by an excellent son for his unfortunate father in *King Lear*, where the sea seems lying enchanted under the shadow of that towering cliff and where all over the wide and rolling highland Nature like a beauty-sprite spreads her handsomest gifts; or lovely hill-stations like Peermade, where meadow-lands and mountains mix delightfully and breathe the pleasantest breezes: or even the celebrated 'Sankumukham,' the seashore of Trivandrum, which yields to no strand in the world in its combined effect of sea and sand, space, scene and setting, of curly surges, of flowing breezes breaking into continual song in the foliage of casuarina-trees. Nor would I speak now of the peculiar graces of the people of Travancore, not of those that stand in the public eye or figure in the politics of the day, but of the common people who live in happy secluded villages and are hardly yet touched by the infectious tendencies in modern civilisation and who consequently add to the natural charms of the land. But of one thing I must speak, which is Travancore's first and foremost glory and in which, moreover, all India rejoices, and which is, if you have not already guessed, the Land's End of India.

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It is Cape Comorin where all India becomes a thin promontory of land pushing into the oceans. As you come to the Cape, the nearer you come the further it seems to go till, all on a sudden, when you least expect it, you find yourself right amid the oceans. Sea to the right, sea to the left and all before and beyond, you ask yourself, 'Is it a dream?' You wonder where you stand, in land or water. The blue dome of the sky flattens over you and you nearly say to yourself that you have only to jump and put up your hand to touch it. The horizons appear to move towards you. The sun rises a few paces to the east of you in the waters and sets a few paces to the west of you in the waters. In the night-time the stars cluster over your head like coronals and the mellow moon seems to weave a halo about you. Here is infinity where everything appears immediate and infinitesimal! Here is all the manifoldness of India melted into a single unity. Cape Comorin is a call, a prayer, a cry, for oneness.

In the vast plains and plateaus of India, where everything is large, the small things assume an importance they have not and the large ones are easily overlooked. But when you stand at the very end of India, which is no bigger than the palm of your hand and where yet the earth and oceans mingle and even the heavens bend down to mingle with them, the larger things become small enough for you to see and the smaller ones melt into thin air. You should come to Cape Comorin to see the vision of things in their just perspective, to feel the loftier patriotism that comes from the knowledge that the many are not many but that all is one.

This is chiefly the reason why our ancestors declared Cape Comorin one of the most sacred places of India and erected a temple on it for a virgin goddess, *Kanya Kumari*, the pure, looking out into the waters smilingly. And in her presence, so it seems, the seas lose their accustomed fury and the land of men its annoyances. You may worship her or not, but cannot help appreciating the beautiful thought that placed a virgin goddess to preside over the termination of India and the conjunction of the oceans.

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If you come to Travancore by railway from the Tinnevelly District you will pass through the Ghats, bathing your eyes in showers of hills and dales teeming with the richest and freshest vegetation. The train zigzags and circles, emitting clouds of smoke, (which take on a strange beauty in the clear air and tangled green), and going two miles to one. As you look at the rolling pomp and jubilee of the woods, you come to see for yourself that you are entering a really beautiful land.

Oriental Knowledge and Occidental Research

By 'A FRENCH SCHOLAR'

The question of the true meaning of Oriental traditional thought and that of the respective present situation of the Orient and the Occident are the object of a series of studies which have been published these last twelve years under the signature of Rene Guenon and which, from the very fact of their touching a great number of topics, have drawn the attention of an extremely varied public spread all over the world. The author of these studies offers to us the very rare case of a writer using a European language—French—and whose knowledge of Eastern ideas has been obtained at first hand, that is essentially from Oriental masters. It is in fact to the oral teachings of Orientals that Monsieur Rene Guenon owes his knowledge of Hindu doctrines, of Islamic esotericism and of Taoism, as well as his knowledge of the Sanskrit and Arabic languages. This characteristic feature sufficiently distinguishes him from European or American 'Orientalists' who have indeed sometimes worked in close touch with Oriental people, but who did not ask them for anything else than an help destined to facilitate a work mainly based on books and texts and totally inspired by the methods of Occidental erudition. On the other hand, the earnestness, the depth and the preciseness of Monsieur Rene Guenon's works are such as to forbid any *rapprochement* with another group which is much less well defined, the group of those people which may be called the 'spiritualist' interpreters of the Orient and whose various theories are fitted less to the 'positivist' than to the sentimental and moralist trend of the Occident, with the result that one often meets in them the most heterogeneous things ranging from mysticism to hygiene

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and including occultism and the philosophical theories of the West.

Monsieur Rene Guenon's work is rather complex and it would be difficult to summarize it. It consists of studies in which the fundamental ideas of Oriental thought are stated and explained, in books on the present situation of the Occident and in others which somehow touch these two subjects.¹ We think we shall sufficiently show the spirit of this work by presenting here some remarks on the respective values of Oriental and of Occidental thought,—remarks which have been inspired by indications given by Monsieur Guenon in some of his books.

Whatever may be said of the respective merits of the Ancients and of the Moderns, of the inhabitants of this or of that continent, there is a superiority which the modern Occidentals claim for themselves and which seems to them to be beyond all doubt: that is, intellectual superiority. All that man has thought of and taught during the many thousand years that have preceded 'modern' times, and all that men of other civilisations may still think of and teach, is, as is generally believed in the West, nothing but a heap of puerile and often quaint beliefs, an expression of a naive mind, incapable of distinguishing what is real from what is imaginary; and one even speaks rather often in the Western world of a 'pre-causal' or 'pre-logical' thought, that is, of a thought which, it is believed, has been that of an extraordinarily long epoch in the course of which the most elementary laws of logic were unknown. Suddenly, by a sort of miraculous illumination, due, to be sure, to the touch of some fairy's magic wand, 'Science,' it is said, appeared in Europe about the sixteenth century A.D.: an experimental science supposed to be 'based' on the observa-

¹ We confine ourselves to quote the *Introduction générale à l'étude des doctrines hindoues* ('General introduction to the study of Hindu doctrines') (Paris, 1921), *Orient et Occident* ('Orient and Occident') (Paris, 1924), and *L'Homme et son devenir selon le Vedanta* (Paris, 1925). An English translation of this last volume has been published by Rider & Co., London, under the title *Man and his becoming according to the Vedanta*.

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tion of perceptible facts and which was soon to be considered as the only serious and possible science. Thus, according to the modern Westerner, mankind knew a period of false science, of fancies more or less poetical and without any relation to reality, in short a 'mythological' period; and it is only in recent times that, its intelligence being at last awakened, it was able to discern the rules of really 'objective' and 'scientific' thought. Of course Christians do not admit that the Bible's contents are 'false science'; but the reservations they make on this subject rarely ever affect their satisfaction in living in a time of 'progress' and of 'enlightenment.' In any case, all representatives of 'positive' science, which, by the way, has become the official one, and specially all ethnologists, all 'sociologists' and the big majority of Orientalists—European and American—accept as an indisputable truth this bipartite conception of the history of human thought: an hypothetical, very simple, and partial conception, and such as to stupefy the learned men of other civilisations.

With regard to this theory, which the general public of the Occident indulge in the more easily as they have never thought of all its consequences, and do not perceive its difficulties, Monsieur Rene Guenon affirms with an equal decisiveness the intellectual superiority of Oriental knowledge, or in a general way of all truly traditional knowledge, over modern Occidental thought. If we consider the respective sources of the one and of the other thought, the difference is such as to exclude any sort of *rapprochement*: for no comparison is possible between knowledge obtained by a full intuition of the intelligible Light, such as the Hindu doctrine affirms,—not only its theoretical possibility, but even its effective realisation in the case of the *jivan-mukta* (and specially in the case of the *rishis*, authors of the *Veda*),—and a purely rational and human research, which can in no way release man from the ignorance and illusion belonging to his state as a manifested being. But as modern thought does not recognise the possibility of that basic knowledge and even

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implicitly denies it in describing as 'myths' the symbolical expressions of it which have been preserved in the traditional books of different peoples, one has to examine the contents and the characteristics of the two kinds of knowledge; this examination, not to speak of other considerations, ought to be sufficient to allow at least a provisional judgment on the authority which attaches to the one and the other thought. It is this we should like to do very rapidly, keeping ourselves to some particularly important and characteristic features and without entering, of course, into any detailed discussion.

One of the most apparent features of modern science is its absence of unity, and its analytical character. Far from constituting a coherent whole, that is a universal synthesis, it is divided into an ever-increasing number of 'specialities,' in the interior of which scientists accumulate their knowledge of details, of 'facts,' without however being able to bring about a synthesis more easily in this smaller field. Now, this shows clearly enough that, if modern research suffers from any defect, it is that it does not possess the ideas which would enable it to co-ordinate and to synthesise all these details; this consideration alone would suffice to explain why Monsieur Rene Guenon has described modern science as a 'science without principles' and as 'an ignorant knowing.' But the absence of principles does not only make impossible any larger views of things and any truly deep conception: it even deprives science of any solid intellectual basis. 'Science,' the same author writes, 'in constituting itself according to modern views, has not only lost in depth, but also, one might say, in solidity, for its attachment to principles made it participate in their immutability as far as its own object allowed it, whereas, being completely shut up in the world of changing things, it does not find anything stable therein, no fixed point on which to rest; not starting from any absolute certitude, it is reduced to probabilities and approximations, or to purely hypothetical constructions which are nothing but a work of the individual fancy.' (*The Crisis of the modern World*, Paris, 1927, pages 99-100). Intelligence, to put it in another way,

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cannot judge of anything if it does not occupy a fixed place, higher than the object which it judges ; and the error of modern science has been its search for immutable principles, necessary to all science, inside an essentially changing experience. As it could not find them there, it had to satisfy itself by using the limited ideas which are accessible to everybody and sufficient for the everyday material life ; but in keeping to these ideas it limited its intellectual horizon and, in the same way, its scope and depth. This is what appears in a particularly striking manner if one compares it with traditional thought whose horizon and scope are not exactly limited by anything, and which possesses ideas, that is, principles of synthesis and of explanation, of a quite different level, as may be easily seen from some instances.

Modern scientific research, firstly, gives no place to the idea of the 'Supreme Principle' though that idea is spread among all the peoples of the world and even the most degenerate. Now, it is the 'Supreme Principle' which, at least under its determination as *Ishwara* or *Brahma saguna*, gives the fundament to the essential unity of the universe, a unity without which the universe could not be coherent nor, therefore, intelligible. If one does not feel the necessity of having recourse to that idea, then we must conclude that the pretensions of speculation are extremely diminished. And if that idea, on the other hand, has disappeared from modern 'scientific' thought, then we must find, as it seems, the reason for it in the impossibility of relating it to the phenomenal multiplicity : 'cosmological' ideas are necessary for this linking up, and oral traditional teaching which furnished them before has entirely disappeared from Europe at a time which, according to a series of indications, seems to lie about three hundred years back. The idea of 'cause' (*karana*), for instance, is no longer understood in Europe in its profound significance, which no modern philosopher has ever perceived, of an 'irreversible relation of identity' implying, on the one hand, the identity of effect and cause, and on the other hand, the superiority, nay the 'transcendence' of the cause

with regard to the effect: two faces, so to say, of the idea of causality, these appear in Hindu thought quite clearly in the relation which unites the *Shakti* to the *Shaktiman*. If the disappearance of the idea of *Brahma* or of the 'Supreme Principle' meant a beheading of Science, so to say, by depriving it of the very principle which maintains the cohesion of all things among themselves and makes possible intelligible general or universal conceptions, the disappearance of the veritable idea of 'causality' (*karanatva*) had no less serious consequences. As the effect could no longer be entirely identified with its cause, it could no longer be entirely explained and there remains between the one and the other an irreducible difference, an essential obscurity due to something else than our ignorance: the habit has thus been formed of considering that there is in things a sort of obscure principle of existence, irreducible to intellectual Light and which therefore could not have issued from it nor be brought back to it; and it is easy to see the links which unite this belief to the western 'materialism' and 'anti-intellectualism.' On the other hand, where there is no longer 'transcendence' there is either no longer a hierarchy, as there is nothing more to justify the 'distances' separating the different 'orders' of the universe from one another: now, thought only escapes confusion by ordered conceptions rigourously maintaining the distinction of principle and application of superior and inferior; there is no intelligible conception without a certain 'order' of the things thought of, and in the intellectual still more than in the social domain, there is no order without hierarchy and no hierarchy without irreversible relations. Lastly, the loss of the true, intellectual notion of causality had another, not less important, consequence, which is the impossibility of Deliverance (*Moksha*) and therefore of total knowledge: Deliverance evidently presupposing the essential identity of *jivatma* with *Paramatma* and the transcendence of the latter with regard to the whole development of his *Shakti*, from *Sadashiva* to *kshiti*.

We shall keep ourselves to these three ideas of the

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'Supreme Principle,' of identity, and of transcendence, whose importance, moreover, is obvious; they form, so to say, the triple basis of the teaching of the *Upanishads*: ideas which, it may be noted, are not specifically Hindu, but rather purely and simply traditional, as they are to be found, identically the same at bottom, in the Taoist works, in those of Islamic esoterism and in old books of the Occident. One could naturally quote many other ideas which have become foreign to Occidental scientific research: as, for instance, the idea of the different 'states' of being and that of the correspondences existing between higher and lower orders; to find a great number of them it would suffice to study any *mandala* or any symbolical representation of the universe, but this would take us too far away from our subject. Against all these ideas the highest principle that modern science offers to us, that which entirely inspires it, is the idea of 'natural law' which it considers as its own discovery, and to which it has given an exclusive importance. Now, that idea has only a very relative and purely apparent intellectual value, as it tends to establish between determined events of the corporeal world relations which are supposed to be 'not-conditioned' and which would constitute so many 'closed-up systems.' Now, there is no other 'not-conditioned' thing than the Absolute, and an entirely closed-up system is not reconcilable with the profound unity and harmony of the universe. However disputable and relative this idea may be, it meets certain possibilities of application in the lowest orders of reality, where the primordial Light is so much divided that it admits at least of certain appearances of 'closed-up systems' and thus it possesses an unquestionable and unquestioned value from the point of view of practical action, and above all of action utilising material means. But where it is no longer applicable, and where also its application would require other ideas than those concerning 'weight and measure,' Occidental Science finds itself without intellectual means and it cannot construe any satisfactory theory. This impotence is particularly visible in those

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branches which have been called 'philosophy' and 'psychology' and in the study of the thought of other civilisations: here we find western science getting embarrassed, heaping up 'facts' and documents without being able to explain and interpret them, or losing itself in a labyrinth of contestable theories and of ephemeral hypotheses. These three domains, we believe, are doubtless the ones where modern thought could best become aware of its own relativity.

In short, Occidental research clearly suffers from a lack of principles, which thus deprives it of a solid basis and of sufficient intellectual means. Falsely believing itself to be based on experience, it does not know either what it is or to what it may claim. Deprived of any fixed guiding mark, it is at the mercy of the slightest mirage, intellectual or sentimental, and it floats about, so to say, in the lowest orders of reality, the only ones where its limited and systematic conceptions can find some application. Having lost any notion of the universal hierarchy, it puts all things on the same plane and explains anything by anything: the soul by the body, the intelligence by social forms, metaphysical symbols by natural phenomena. The systematic application of a certain experimental method has led modern techniques to the realisations which are well-known and, which, astonishing the man in the street, bind him more and more to the well-being and to the amusements they procure for him. But this is a result of an extra-intellectual order whose value is, besides, disputable; from the point of view of knowledge, as Monsieur Reme Guenon has remarked, no hesitation is possible between a mere accumulation of knowledge of details, however useful they may be from some points of view, and the irreconcilable whole of the traditional ideas, which open up to man quite different prospects, not only in the order of theoretical speculation, but also in that of the 'realisations' at which he can aim.

Our Forum

UDAY SHANKAR

To THE EDITOR,
Triveni, Madras

Sir,

In 1933, after Uday Shankar's visit to Madras, *Triveni* published a criticism of his art from the point of view of Bharata and the traditional dance by the present writer, under the pseudonym 'Ganadasa.' This criticism was, regrettably enough, made use of to discredit Uday Shankar by interested persons who sometimes exceeded the limits of that criticism in their propaganda against him,—a development which if it had been foreseen, might have induced the writer to keep his opinion to himself instead of publishing it.

That criticism related exclusively to Shankar's performance of 1933,—a period when the artist did not command the materials that he commands now. It was then contended that his art was exotic, that it had some contacts with classical sculpture, but few with classical dance as outlined by Bharata and the living dance traditions derived from the classical system. On behalf of Shankar it was urged that he was free to abandon the traditions and Sastra and evolve an art of his own, which would not be the less classical and less Indian on that account. Indeed, some claimed that his glory consisted in his rejection of the traditions.

Uday Shankar however has repudiated these defences by a course of discipline in Kathakali under an eminent master from Kerala,—an act of courage that reveals the true artist that he is. Critics of tradition, let us hope, would disown Uday Shankar now, because he has succumbed to its blandishments instead of creating an art of his own. Let us hope also that these good people would delight the world and themselves by reviving that unfortunate art which they wanted Uday Shankar to create.

Since, Uday Shankar has been learning and practising. His 1935 dance compositions have little in common with his

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attempts of 1933. Not only has he outgrown the greater part of his imperfections, but intimacy with tradition has taught him to express himself with beauty and force. That Kathakali is responsible for the magnificent tableau at the beginning of his Siva-Parvati duet with its many felicities of attitude and raiment, is no demerit, because Kathakali no less than other traditions requires imaginative artists dowered with the gift of physical beauty, as rich as Uday Shankar's, to expound it. Mr. Pothan Joseph of the *Hindustan Times*, in the course of a lengthy attack on the classicism of Uday Shankar, queried whether it was possible to render a dance exactly as it was rendered in Sri Harsha's time, intending to bring home the utter impossibility of it. In the tableau referred to above, Uday Shankar has in a great measure done it,—a truly marvellous feat of artistic synthesis !

To invoke Bharata and tradition, one imagined, was the trait of a Pundit ; obviously Uday Shankar is not ashamed of a trait that throws him into the company of a much hated class of people. Like Shankar, the writer also is a student and a votary of the very Bharata and traditions that he has invoked ; he would be therefore denying himself if he denied Uday Shankar now.

More beautiful than his dance was his gesture to such of those as were not fully pleased with his expositions, past and present, not to judge him by these, but to judge him by what he intends to do. The writer who has been pleased by his present performance makes bold to assert that, at this rate, his future is certain to prove far greater than his past : indeed, he may turn out to be the medium through whom Natya-Kala might fulfil itself,—the man born to be king, of Dance ! Like Shankar the writer also is continuously learning : among other things he has learnt recently is the occasional utility of such people who, with Shankar, invoke tradition and Bharata.

Mylapore, Madras
31st March, 1935

Truly yours,
K. V. RAMACHANDRAN

Reviews

[We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French, and German. Books for review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.]

SANSKRIT

Raghunathabhyudaya of Ramabhadramba.—(Bulletins of the Sanskrit Department—No. 2.—Edited by T. R. Chintamani, M.A., Ph.D., University of Madras.—1934. Price Re. 1. Foreign 2sh.)

This Sanskrit poem deals with the life of the Nayak king Raghunatha who lived in the earlier half of the seventeenth century; the author was a beloved mistress of that king. The character of the king is likely therefore to be somewhat idealised and his achievements given exaggerated values. But a careful historian can easily quarry from this poem considerable historical material. His conclusions can be corroborated by the *Sahityaratnakara*, another extant historical poem about the same king, and verified by the numerous inscriptions and other historical records of the period. A mention of this poem was made by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiya^{gar} in his 'Sources of Vijayanagar History' and by Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao in the 'Madras Christian College Magazine' but the poem itself has not been published till now. Dr. Chintamani has done considerable service to the students of South Indian history by obtaining a transcript of this poem from the manuscript in the Saraswati Mahal Library at Tanjore and editing it with an introductory note on the author and a summary in English, canto by canto, of the contents of the Kavya.

Apart from its obvious value to the student of history, the poem is a notable and welcome addition to Kavya literature. The poetess is apparently endowed with a rich imagination and commands an easy flowing style. The use of *alankaras* reveals considerable poetic talent. There are many delightful echoes from the *Ramayana* and the works of Kalidasa. The quaint conceits of the authoress add a rare charm to the

TRIVENI

descriptive portions of the poem. Special mention may be made of the descriptions of the Cauvery river and the Chola country. The poetess has, besides, the rare gift of turning maxims into epigrams which have the ring of proverbs.

How the 'charming descriptions, the edifying dialogues and the luminous excursions' of the *Ramayana* have permeated the mind of the poetess as well as the daily life of her hero is rendered apparent at every turn of this poem, in the poetic descriptions as well as in the delineations of the characters. There is a delightful summary of the *Ramayana* story in the fourth canto which brings out prominently how the hero Raghunatha modelled his life on the life of Sri Rama.

Concluding cantos, eleven and twelve, contain an intimate description of the Nayak's harem. Sanskritic and Sastraic studies had permeated the lives even of the women of the period; and the several accomplishments of the ladies of the royal court of Raghunatha Nayak in the triple streams of culture—poetry, music and drama—ought to enthuse modern Indian women in their attempts to regain their past eminence and glory.

Another feature of the poem, for which lovers of Carnatic music and South Indian dance as well as research workers in those topics feel thankful to Dr. Chintamani, is that the last canto contains references to the *ragas* and dances in vogue in the earlier part of the seventeenth century.

The Unadisutras in Various Recensions.—(Madras University Sanskrit Series, No. 7, Part 6. Edited by T. R. Chintamani, M.A., Ph.D., University of Madras.—1934. Price Rs. 3. Foreign 6 sh.).

This part contains the *Unadi Sutras* of Bhoja and those of the Katantra school with the commentaries or 'vrittis' of Dandanatha Narayana and of Durga-simha respectively. Both these sets of sutras are different from the sutras of the Paniniyan school. The sutras of the Katantra school have been published in the *Bibliotheca Indica* Series; but that edition does not contain the portion relating to Unadi. For the first time, both the sutras and the commentary of Durga-simha have been published, as part of the Series of *Unadi Sutras*, by Dr. Chintamani. The commentary is bound to be of considerable help not only in the study of the sutras of the

REVIEWS

Katantra but also in arriving at the correct readings of several of them. The Editor has been put to considerable difficulties in reconstructing the text from the only palm-leaf manuscript available to him, which in several places was moth-eaten, rendering the deciphering of the letters almost impossible in very many places. The tentative readings given by Dr. Chintamani will, it is hoped, stand the test of corroboration by other scholars who may have access to other manuscripts, containing the text and commentary of these sutras ; in any case, in the absence of other copies these tentative readings will be welcome to students of Sanskrit grammar as supplementing Professor Eggeling's edition and helping in the reconstruction of the sutras of the Katantra school.

The other set of sutras forms a part of the Sanskrit Grammar *Saraswati Kanthabharana* of Bhoja, the full text of which work the learned Editor will be publishing shortly. The Unadi portion of the sutras are now issued along with a commentary by one Dandanatha, valuable suggestions about whose identity are contained in the introduction. Neither these sutras nor the commentary have been published before. Dr. Chintamani has, however, in his edition of Paniniyan Unadisutras (published as part 2 of this number) given the correlations made by Narayana Bhatta between the sutras of the Paniniyan school and the Bhoja sutras and also published the list, given by that commentator, of the sutras of Bhoja which could not be brought under any of the Paniniyan sutras. The publication of the authentic text of the Bhoja sutras will enable the student of Vyakarana to appreciate the efforts of Narayana Bhatta to make a comparative study of the sutras of the two schools.

We are told that the textual readings relating to these Unadi Sutras are noted under the corresponding section of the *Saraswatikanthabharana*. It would have been more convenient to the student of the Unadisutras to have them incorporated in this part itself.

V. NARAYANAN

TRIVENI

ENGLISH

Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire.—
By Dr. B. A. Saletore, with a Foreword by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, (B. G. Paul & Co., Madras 1934, Volumes I and II, Pages LV+470+525, Rs. 10.)

These two volumes form a very creditable addition to the respectable number of valuable publications on South Indian history which Messrs. Paul & Co., have issued in recent years. The reputation which this firm has established in the field of historical publications on South India is perhaps unrivalled in Madras; and the present attempt is quite in keeping with the past record of the firm. The author of these two volumes is a scholar of the Germanic type with training and experience in Berlin, and he has had the benefit of guidance under that punctilious scholar who has made for himself a unique name in Indian history, namely, the Rev. Fr. Heras. The volumes have been published with the aid of a grant from the Publication Fund of the University of London and a generous donation by a gentleman who has preferred to remain anonymous. They are dedicated to Dr. L. D. Barnett, the author's teacher and guide. A short introduction from the pen of Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar adds to the value of the work which was originally approved as thesis for the Doctorate of Philosophy in the University of London in 1931.

Volume I begins with the detailed classification of the copious bibliographical sources upon which the author has relied. An idea of the thoroughness of the list can be seen from the fact that it covers 42 pages. The volume contains 9 chapters besides an introduction. In the first of these the author describes the country in general and in the succeeding chapters he deals successively with the capitals of the empire, the revenue administration, central government, local government, 'justice and oppression,' foreign relations (with some reference to Hindu-Muhammadan amity), and the army.

Volume II has got 9 chapters devoted to the description of the Varnasrama-dharmas, the social institutions in general, the Brahmins, women, social legislation; public service, honours and patriotism; habitation, food and dress, corporate life in social matters, and lastly, festivals, games and amusements. In every chapter there is a general introduction deal-

REVIEWS

ing with pre-Vijayanagara times, followed by the details connected with Vijayanagara. Every fact is supported by ample quotations from all the original authorities, indigenous and foreign. There are occasionally expressions of views which may not be unanimously approved. But the author always tries to demonstrate his views with copious documentation. This volume is illustrated with a picture of the Virupaksha temple and three other pictures to illustrate dancing and hunting scenes taken from temple walls. There is a glossary of technical terms covering over 40 pages, followed by an index of 56 pages. The author, it will be thus observed, has rendered a substantial service to the cause of South Indian history. Though it is regrettable that, in a scheme planned so largely and carried out so successfully, there are no special chapters allotted to the numerous schools of literature and philosophy; though the reader misses the large achievements of the people in the field of Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Kanarese literatures, as well as the large number of spiritual and philosophical treatises which appeared copiously in all shades of religious thought from the numerous village colonies which were established on a large scale by the emperors throughout the vast expanse of the empire; there can be no doubt that the exhaustive study of all the other aspects of the history of this glorious period of South India is a thing of which the author may be proud and for which students of Indian history cannot be sufficiently grateful.

V. RANGACHARYA

The Metaphysics of Berkeley.—By G. W. Kaveeshwar, M.A. (Published by Mrs. Ashavati Kaveeshwar, C/O Mr. M. K. Bakshi, B.A., Headmaster, Government High School, Khandwa, C. P. Price Rs. 2-8 net.)

Lucid as the critical exposition of the Metaphysics of Berkeley is, the value of the book is enhanced by the parallelism that is drawn between the Berkeleian system and Vijnanavada. The author agrees with Fraser in characterising Berkeley's position as 'Spiritual Realism,' a theory which holds that 'what-so-ever is real is ultimately spiritual in essence.' Superficial students of Berkeley are apt to regard his metaphysical system as subjective idealism; and this mode of understanding his philosophy is not without support from his own writings. When he says that the *esse* of every object

is its *percipi*, he appears exactly to re-echo the dictum of the Vijnanavadins that, because blue and the cognition thereof are never seen apart, they must be identical.

But what is essential in Berkeley's system is not its subjectivistic tendency. Mr. Kaveeshwar distinguishes subjective idealism, which holds that each particular thing lasts only so long as the particular perception of it by some one individual percipient lasts, from objective idealism according to which a thing continues to exist so long as any spirit is perceiving it, and he gives it as his opinion that what is essential in Berkeley's philosophy is its vein of objective idealism.

Thoughtful students of Berkeley will agree with him in his view that the Irish Bishop destroyed matter in order to make room for God. Berkeley confuses metaphysics with theology; and Berkeley's philosophy is essentially a theology —a doctrine about God. Many of the criticisms which the author of this book levels against the inconsistencies of Berkeley's metaphysics are acute and just; and the book, while being a valuable addition to the literature in the field, is likely to be particularly useful to Indian students of Western Philosophy.

S. S. S.

From Wrong Angles.—By Gagan Vihari Mehta (Published by the Author, 70 A, Chakrababu Road, Calcutta. Price Re. 1-8-0, pp. 181).

Mr. Mehta has been known to the Indian reading public as a contributor to some of our leading journals and periodicals. By family tradition and present vocation he belongs to 'big business.' In this volume he steps aside from the high seriousness of commerce and in a mood of sportive banter makes fun of our problems and politicians. To a people like us not particularly endowed with the sense of humour, works like Mr. Mehta's are of great value. They afford not only intellectual delectation but help understanding, for a good smile makes the world kin. In the preface the author has quoted from a French journal, 'I hasten to make fun of everything lest it make me weep,' which forms as it were the moral justification of the present work. The opening paper, 'The Viceroy of Tomorrow,' is in the author's best vein. It is less an effort at parody than an essay in psychology. It is

REVIEWS

an imaginative reconstruction of the reactions of some of our leading politicians to the startling thought of their becoming the Viceroy of India. Other notable papers are 'Geometry of the First Round Table Conference,' 'How to repair the Round Table,' 'Third Round,' 'Impressions and Depressions' and 'A singular outburst of Plurals.' Mr. Mehta is gifted with a style that is suited to the purpose. It is light without being trivial, and his epigrams and paradoxes have all the naturalness and spontaneity that can only be found with humourists of a class. This is a book which ought to be read and enjoyed.

M. S. C.

TELUGU

Natya Kala.—(7, Thambu Chetty St., Madras, Annual subscription Rs. 2, Single copy As. 8).

This quarterly journal, devoted to drama and the fine arts, is the official organ of the 'Andhra Nataka Kala Parishat.' Recognising the need for a co-ordination of all artistic activities in Andhra, the Parishat brings together, every year, actors and playwrights, musicians and dancers. The Telugu stage must be so transformed as to make it the brightest expression of the artistic talents of the people. While we have gifted actors amongst us, the plays produced are pitiful. The advent of the 'contract play' has lowered the tone of our performances. The Parishat is seeking to reform the stage, to encourage playwrights, to build up a National Theatre. The *Natya Kala* is a worthy exponent of the ideals of the Parishat. It is exceedingly well-produced and contains representative articles on every aspect of the art of the theatre. There is some amount of overlapping of themes in the first number, and far too many photographs of actors off the stage. Mr. N. V. Seshayya is a great enthusiast, and under his editorship the *Natya Kala* is bound to occupy a high rank among Andhra journals.

A History of India.—Part I, The Hindu Period. By M. Somasekhara Sarma (The Indian Publishing House Ltd., Madras. Price Re. 1.)

It is not often that a school-book on history rises to the dignity of literature. Mr. Sarma, however, is a writer of beautiful Telugu prose, in addition to being a research scholar

TRIVENI.

of high attainments. In his books and papers, he maintains the standards set by his Guru, the late lamented K. V. Lakshmana Rao. The present work, ostensibly prepared 'in accordance with the Syllabus for Group A of the S.S.L.C.,' deserves a much loftier place than the one it seeks to fill. It incorporates the results of the latest research, and even students of the B.A. classes may turn to it with profit. Within the short compass of less than 300 pages, it narrates the story of our strivings and failures, and the vicissitudes of our religious and cultural life. To the general reader, happily free from the incubus of examinations, Mr. Sarma's book is an ideal introduction to the study of Indian history.

Udayini.—(Published six times a year. Annual subscription Rs. 4. Single copy As. 12. 15, Audiappa Mudali Street, Vepery, Madras.)

Since the ill-starred *Jayanti* ceased publication, we have not come across any Telugu journal fit to take its place as the interpreter of the progressive tendencies in Telugu literature. A host of cheap periodicals have come up, which have vulgarised the public taste and dragged journalism into the mire. *Udayini*, edited by Mr. Kompella Janardana Rao, seems almost like the *Jayanti* reborn under happier auspices. As a reviewer in the *Kistna Patrika* puts it, the *Udayini* inherits the 'unfulfilled renown' of *Sahiti*, *Sakhi*, and *Jayanti*. It has already enlisted the co-operation of nearly all the leading writers in prose and verse. Beautiful in form, and rich in its contents, *Udayini* is an ornament to Telugu journalism. Besides poems and stories, the first two numbers give us some valuable literary criticism. We are unable, however, to reconcile ourselves to the prose style of the Editor.

K. R.

Opinion of
Sir C. V. Raman, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., N.L.

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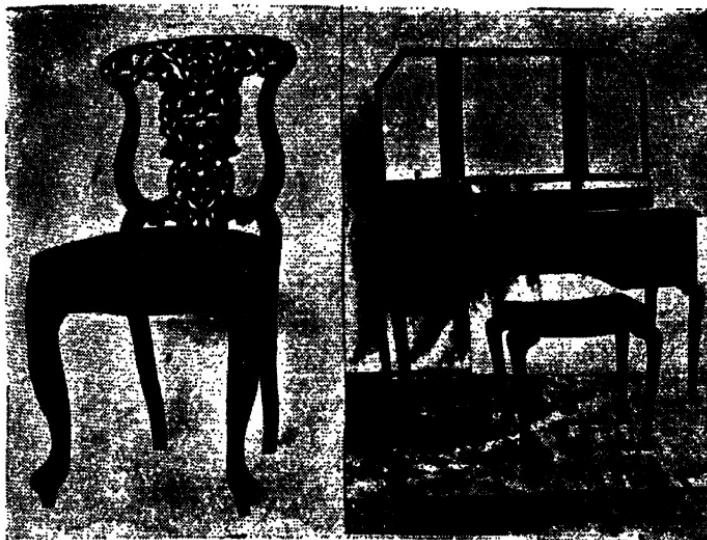
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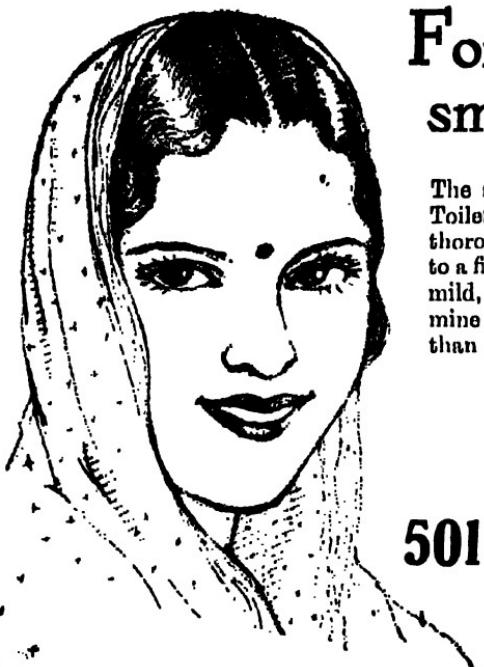
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"The Veena Player"

TRIVENI

JOURNAL OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

Editor : K. RAMAKOTIŚWARA RAU

'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the elect. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

Vol. VII, No. 5

March-April 1935

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ILLUSTRATION

- 'The Veena Player'**
By Sjt. Nandalal Bose *(Frontispiece)*

. . . he that laboureth right for loss of Me
• Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !
—The Song Celestial

‘The Triple Stream’

‘THE VEENA PLAYER’

In connection with the visit of Rabindranath Tagore to Madras in October 1934, a Santiniketan Arts and Crafts Exhibition was held at Congress House. Among the pictures that won the admiration of several art-lovers was a line-drawing by Sjt. Nandalal Bose entitled ‘The Veena Player.’ On a background of light yellow silk, the artist displayed his well-known mastery over line and curve, and created a form of entrancing loveliness. It is usual to speak of the prominence of line in Indian painting, but here was something that revealed the endless possibilities of artistic creation in mere outline, without light and shade or the play of colours. As the gifted creator of this thing of beauty was present in person at the Exhibition, the Editor approached him with a request to permit him to reproduce the picture in *Triveni*. This provided an occasion to renew the acquaintance formed years ago at Santiniketan. The permission was readily given, and we are privileged to include the picture in the present number. It is infinitely more uplifting to adorn a room with one or two pictures like ‘The Veena Player’ than to crowd it with cheap and tawdry prints, including the calendars that seem to be the last word in ugliness. We offer our grateful thanks to Sjt. Nandalal Bose on behalf of *Triveni*. A word of praise is rightly due to the Indian Photo-Engraving Company, Calcutta, for the excellent manner in which they have reproduced the picture.

THE ‘TRIVENI’ TRUST

‘Once again, the begging bowl’—such, inevitably, will be the feeling of most readers of *Triveni* after a perusal of

¹ 19th May, 1935

TRIVENI

the Appeal issued by Sir S. Radhakrishnan and other distinguished friends of the journal. A word of explanation is therefore necessary.

The position of *Triveni* is not so bad now as it was two or three years ago. There are enough subscribers and advertisers to enable it to pay its way. But some subscribers fall into arrears, and every year there is a deficit of about a thousand rupees. If we could, within a single year, enlist three hundred fresh subscribers, there would be no deficit. Subscribers, however, do not come in hundreds ; they come in two's and three's. Further, it is our experience that as new subscribers are added, some old subscribers drop out. And so, from year to year, the utmost we have been able to do is to maintain our list at a steady level. With greater resources, the journal could be improved considerably on its literary side, and published with regularity. It would then attract wider attention and support. It might even become a Monthly. The financing of the journal has all along remained a grave problem, for, while *Triveni* is not exactly starved, it is certainly underfed.

All this formed the subject-matter of a conversation between two valued friends of the Editor as they travelled from Waltair to Madras. Between them they evolved the idea of a Trust Fund, and communicated the news to the Editor the moment they reached Madras. It was good news,—almost too good to be true. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, who is on the Advisory Board, approved of the scheme : he only wondered if there were enough honorary workers to go about the country and collect funds. But there is a great deal of sympathy, and even intense affection for *Triveni*; there are several subscribers who cannot afford to pay a life-subscription of Rs. 100, but would yet like to render some help in addition to the payment of the annual subscription ; there are life-subscribers who may be willing to pay what will last for five or six lives ! Then again, there are groups of friends everywhere, with plenty of energy and influence, who would be only too glad to work for a cultural

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enterprise like *Triveni*. It is true that the work has to be spread out in many provinces and over many months. But the begging bowl must be burnished and kept ready for the inflow of the streams of silver and gold and cheques that the signatories to the Appeal ask for. Till the Trust is legally constituted, Mr. K. Chandrasekharan will be in charge of the bowl. This is an opportunity not merely to relieve the Editor from financial worries but to give permanence to the journal and make of it a great national institution. As years go by, the Trust may be the means of lighting up with hope the hearts of poets, artists and scholars, struggling for recognition and reward. So then, we have done our duty by offering this explanation. It now remains for you to do yours.

GOKAK ON BENDRE

The uniqueness of *Triveni*, we must confess with regret, is that it not only does not pay its contributors for their articles but actually collects subscriptions, including life-subscriptions, from many of them. From his undergraduate days young Gokak has belonged to this generous band. After taking the M. A. with distinction, he blossomed into a Professor of the College which counted Tilak and Gokhale among its illustrious roll of teachers. His position as a poet and writer in Kannada may be judged from the fact that, last year, he was invited to preside over the Poets' Conference at Raichur. It is rare to find among the younger *litterateurs* of India a first-rate English scholar like Prof. Gokak who is prepared to devote his talents to an interpretation and critical appreciation of the literary treasures in his mother-tongue. In our view, this work is vastly more important than original literary production in English. In every linguistic unit of India, great literature is being produced. The only way to bring this to the notice of people in other provinces, and in other countries, is to write about it in English and, whenever practicable, to give good renderings which preserve the spirit and atmosphere of the originals. With this conviction, we have always set great store by articles interpreting the vernacular litera-

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tures of India and translations of stories and poems. It somehow happens that gifted persons with a turn for English writing fail to see eye to eye with us and insist on sending to us their own original productions. Though we have occasionally given them publication, our heart has ever been in the other kind of writing,—the evaluation of modern Indian literature.

Gokak pays an affectionate tribute to Bendre, as man and as poet. If anything, he has erred on the side of understatement. For, though we are innocent of Kannada, we have it on the authority of one of the foremost literary men of Karnataka that Bendre's poetry is much more than 'a great promise,' that the fulfilment is also great, that his work is worthy to rank with the best in any modern language, Indian or foreign. A careful reading of Gokak's article confirms this verdict.

The Shakta¹

Remove the thorns of life by Thy Elysian gift of prayer,
My heart with Thy sword of dawn from its thousand bonds
make bare.

Pour from Thy temple's rainbow gleam
Melody in a sacred stream,

Initiate in Thy lotus-vow with the voice of Spring's delight :
Cleave in my heart with Thy sword of dawn its thousand
bonds of Night.

Churn Thy moon-song of joyful morrow .
From the ocean of my lonely sorrow,

Let each drop of my blood dance bugling to Thy march of
might :
Cleave in my heart with Thy sword of dawn its thousand
bonds of Night.

My worship be Thy frankincense,
My love—Thy rhythm-opulence :

Silence my dread of fall—strengthen my soul to heavenward
flight :
Cleave in my heart with Thy sword of dawn its thousand
bonds of Night.

Let the lightning of Thy beauty shine
Chasing earth's false dreams, Mother mine !

Conquer my rebel self-love with surrender's peace and light :
Cleave in my heart with Thy sword of dawn its thousand
bonds of Night.

DILIP KUMAR ROY

(Translated from his own BENGALI poem,
and corrected by Sri Aurobindo)

¹ Shakta is a worshipper of Shakti—the Divine in its dynamic Mother-aspect.

‘Song’

Throughout the silver reaches of the dawn
 Gentle and happy with a flush of rose,
All the high loyalties their hearts had sworn
 And armoured Time could never quell nor any grave
 might close,
Rose up and broke in foam-fresh of morning sky :
 Thus Brightness spoke and heard dim earth reply—

‘ There is a clearness more silver than the dew,
 Within the questing thought it builds a fane ;
The clear-lit hope untrammelled hearts pursue
 Cries in its living colours from behind the faint-washed
 bow of rain.

Stained with this light from beyond the world I strive
For the hate-unburdened race.....fearless.....and alive.’

Swift flows the endless river pearly with singing
 In the far unshadowed land where wisdom starts ;
Through the undefeated sky two white swans winging
 Linked with the golden chain no envious corrosion parts.
Heart-held mirror shows the silver dream :
Singing, the tranquil river flows.....white pinions gleam.

‘ ARJAVA ’

(Suggested in part by two lines from W. B. Yeats' poem
The Withering of the Boughs—

‘ I know of the sleepy country, where swans fly round
 Coupled with golden chains, and sing as they fly.’)

The Art of Nicholas Roerich

By PROF. SHANTI PRASAD VARMA, M.A.

Art is the expression of life. Those dreamy moments which we devote to the realisation of this eternal life are the only moments in which we truly 'live.' They alone are the symbol of utmost wakefulness. We do not live by merely keeping our eyelids widely apart. The mind which does not resound to the sweet twitter of a bird, the heart which does not leap with joy at the smile of a flower, the soul which does not see its reflection in the twinkle of the stars, and does not move with the mad waves of the ocean, cannot be a proper vehicle of life. Those who really live have in their eyes the glamour of the eternity of life, in their emotions a sensitiveness to the sorrow of the whole creation, in their soul a great rapture, in their love an infinite expanse. They are the persons who can find companions in the snow-clad mountain-peaks and who can share their feelings with the withering leaves of autumn. They alone can create art.

The small storms and tempests of our world do not reach the Himalayan heights of art. Our petty prejudices, the ties between man and man, selfishness and passion—all scatter themselves in the lower ranges and die down. On the heights the pink rays of the setting sun play hide and seek with the whiteness of snow. In this ocean of beauty the artist alone keeps himself above the thousand coils of irrepressible creative urge. The rest remains merged in beauty. Whatever is created out of this turmoil is the eternal possession of mankind.

The name of Nicholas Roerich is highly reputed as one of those few personalities who have been able to pitch their tents at the Everest heights of art. This great artist, poet, thinker, and researcher is spending his sixties in the final *sadhana* of life in the Kulu district of the Himalayan valleys.

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The duality of the world he has left long behind him. Time and space lose their dividing lines at those heights of art which he has attained, and thus make it difficult for us to place him in the conventional grades of painters. He has so completely harmonized himself with the unity of life in its diversity that it has become impossible to trace behind his colours the influence of country or creed. Born in a Russian village and learning the rudiments of his art in St. Petersburg and Paris, he has today imprinted his name on the rocks of the whole world. More than three thousand of his paintings are adorning the various art galleries in all the continents, an honour never attained by any other painter. A sky-scraper of forty-nine storeys has been specially raised in New York for the exhibition of his works. The 'Kalabhavan' of Rai Krishnadas at Benares is also fortunate in possessing a dozen of his best creations.

The art of Nicholas Roerich is universal. It bears upon it neither the imprint of East nor of West. Roerich has been a ceaseless traveller and has drawn his paintings in various countries, in different surroundings; and at all places he has dipped his brush deep into the soul of the atmosphere. This has been the key to his success. The expressive colours and the surprising originality which he has exhibited in his works on the Himalayas are incomparable. He has completely merged his personality in the snowy expanse of the Himalayas.

He is famous as a wizard in colours. The touch of his brush, the depth of his colours and the clear vagueness of his outlines bring with them a tempest of emotions, but what appeals to me most in the paintings of Nicholas Roerich is his symbolism. There is a school in the West which confuses painting with photography. It places *Satyam* above both *Sivam* and *Sundaram*. But true art does not lie in merely dipping your brush in the colour-box and sketching what is seen by the physical eye alone. A Japanese writer of the 18th century considered it a great fault of the Western pictures that they dived too deeply into the realities, and called these pictures mere groups of words.

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To create art is to enter into the inmost depths of life and to express its soul in beautiful colours. Nicholas Roerich does not think much of painting 'matter' as it appears to the naked eye, but he has entered deep into feelings and has been able to catch by his artistic eye a full glimpse of the eternal truth of life and has expressed that great truth in his art.

The paintings represent the deepest poetic emotions at their highest. It appears that the painter has filled his outlines with songs which have lost their voice into the faintness of the lines, and thus his creation is all poetry in colours. Einstein once wrote that he was never impressed by anything so much as by a painting of Roerich. To see one of his paintings is an education in the highest poetic culture.

It is one of Roerich's special virtues to give fitting names to his paintings. The artist finds it difficult to name his latest offspring. What he paints in the tempest of his feelings is sometimes incomprehensible to himself in 'saner' moments. But Nicholas Roerich is an artist who never slumbers, who has made the art the expression not of his madness but of his sanity. Whatever he creates with the strength of his genius out of the waves of the emotions belongs as much to him as the child to its mother. He may play with it and fondle it. He may kiss and cajole it. He gives a simple, easy name to his creation at the mere mention of which the whole picture stands at your beck and call, naked in all its beauty.

'Remembrance' is one of these small colour poems. In the distance, the blue peaks of the Himalayas, with all the rapture of Nature in their limbs, stand smiling. A man with an air of self-confidence in his expression, is riding a white steed. In the corner, two women stand looking wistfully at him. Their hearts seem to spring into the gleam of their eyes and ask, 'Will you remember?' The artist has so arranged things that the question reverberates through the whole atmosphere. The traveller looks back, but the horse will not stop. And then, who can remember this small hut in the wide range of mountains? It will fade from the traveller's vision in a

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moment. Then gradually, these high cliffs too will fall back, because the traveller has to move on. Then, in another world, will the traveller who has not stopped and is still moving, be able to remember all this? Who can tell?

The work of Nicholas belongs to that range of art where there is no division and classification, but where there is only an effort to realise the ultimate harmony. This has carried the artist so near to Nature. In his paintings, Nature does not serve the slavish purpose of decorating man's activities or giving fuller expression to his feelings, but spreads with the fullest freedom of its own expanse. Men with all their pettiness do not even dare look up at the high cliff, but pass on, with awe and reverence in their eyes. There is a painting named the 'Dowry of the Princess.' The mountain peaks rise higher and higher. But the dowry of the princess, hiding all its grandeur in its small bosom, moves slowly on, and occupies hardly a tenth part of the whole picture. In the 'Audience' a man sits down in a corner and listens to the vast message of Nature. In 'Lord Buddha' and the 'Leader' Nature appears so much akin to man that the scattered mountain ranges give us an impression of human children at play.

Nicholas Roerich, in spite of his birth in the West, is nearer to the soul of the East. The unity behind all life was perhaps never before understood so well by any body in the West. But let us acknowledge one thing. In the whole history of Indian painting, though the painters sat in the lap of Nature herself, they could never give such a predominance to her as we find in the works of Roerich. The Indian painter always measured the value of Nature in human coins. The Chinese and Japanese, who owe their inspiration in colours to India, seem to have been more moved by the vast infinity of Nature. Our painters could never paint Nature in her great seclusion.

Roerich has drawn his motifs largely from Nature but he does not so much enter into the form as into the spirit. His landscapes are not mere reflections of Nature. They are

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poems in colour. Emerson rightly expressed the true function of this type of art. 'In landscape,' he writes, 'the painter should give the suggestion of a fairer creation than we know. The details, the prose of Nature, he should omit, and give us the spirit of splendour. He should know that the landscape has beauty to the eye because it expresses the thought which is to him good, and this because the same power which sees through his eyes is seen in that spectacle; and he will come to value the expression of Nature, and not Nature itself, and so exalts in his copy the features which please him. He will give the gloom of gloom and the sunshine of sunshine.' These words can be literally applied to the paintings of Roerich.

Nicholas Roerich is a creative artist. His creations have enriched the richness of the world. He is not one of those millions of painters, who spend their life-time in imitating higher artists. Roerich's technique of painting, his emotions and the method of their expression, are all his own. What he has attained in his successful life of thought and action, he has expressed with great fondness in his pictures. His pictures are not merely full of deep emotions, but also reflect the intensity of his thoughts. Behind each painting of Roerich there is a philosophy of life and an effort to solve problems which have been confusing us for ages.

The path of Nicholas Roerich is one of peace and love. His subjects of creation are not the restless hours of tumultuous night when the bedewed lamp-posts look wistfully at the sottish crowd, but the snow-peaked cliffs of the Himalayas and the vastness of the sky. In the eternal solitude of life the art of Nicholas Roerich has reached its climax. He has portrayed women much better than men, because they are more akin to beauty and art, but his mountain ranges cannot be rivalled even by the portraiture of Kwan-thin, the Chinese goddess of grace.

The life of Nicholas Roerich itself is the expression of a great truth. His name has resounded from one corner of the world to another, but he has found the progressive reali-

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sation of life, not in the ball-rooms of Europe nor in the sky-scrappers of New York, but in the 'Uruswati Institute' which he has established in the lap of the Himalayas. Humanity itself will one day get tired of this tumult of death and will seek its true life in the vast expanse of Nature.

But Roerich does not believe that to seek eternal peace we have to flee physically from the madding crowd. He has himself dreamt the best visions of art in the busiest streets of the world, and given them form and colour. Roerich thinks that, by drawing the horizons of beauty round us, we can attain those heights where there is no place for the smaller things of life. At one place he writes : 'In beauty we unite. Let us repeat these words not on snowy heights but in the tumult of the towns. And taking this to be the sole truth, with a joyful smile, we welcome the future.'

The pictures of Roerich are even more optimistic than his life. In Rai Krishna's collection, there is a painting named 'Kalki.' 'Kalki' stands as a symbol of optimism, but the feelings which have been given voice by Roerich in that painting, where this incarnation of hope appears in the clouds above the Himalayas, are too deep for our expression. 'The Sign of Maitreya' also paints the future Messiah of the world in the same vivid colours. But the artist in Roerich has not lost sight of the hard facts of life in the golden dreams of his optimism. 'The Unspilt Cup' is another of his immortal works. A man is descending from the Himalayan peaks full of snow and glaciers. He holds in his hand the cup of eternal life. The path is steep. There is danger of its contents being spilt. There is always that danger. Who is there among us who has carried his cup through the steep path without spilling a drop?

Nicholas Roerich's ideas regarding art are also worth studying. He does not believe in art being for art's sake alone. This principle casts a bitter reflection of keeping ourselves aloof from the humdrum of everyday life. It gives flowing tresses and squint eyes and frock-coats to the artists. Roerich considers that art alone to be true which unites. His

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beliefs are that 'art alone will establish unity among mankind,' and that 'it is for the enjoyment of each of us.' 'Each man,' he writes, 'can feel the joy of true art. The doors of its sacred expression should be open for all. The light of art will fill all hearts with a new love.'

In this period of Indian Renaissance, when art is undergoing the travail of a new birth, the existence of this universal poet of colour in our midst should be a matter of congratulation for us. The renascent painting of modern India has a surprising record of progress. The names of Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose and Kshitindra Nath Majumdar must cause pride to any country. We have been able to revive the memory of Ajanta, but as the famous art-critic O. C. Ganguly thinks, our modern art 'is hardly yet pulsating with the throb of modern aspirations.' A study of Roerich's art will lead our painters nearer to the soul of the world.

A Summer Night

The night is cool ; the oppressive glare of day
Has left no trace on earth ; a landward breeze
Freshening and blowing through the spring-decked trees
Echoes the ceaseless roar of a troubled bay.
The young Moon with the monsoon clouds at play
Sends forth a dreamy gaze ; a distant flute
Is marred by the barking of a haunted brute ;
Forces of darkness hold the world in sway.
A thousand thought-forms racing through the mind,
Feelings of hope and fear, of joy and woe
That rise and fall like waves tossed by the wind --
Where are they shaped ? Towards what goal their flow ?
Nothing affects the Soul's eternal sky
That watches in silence all this passing by.

ANILBARAN ROY

The Third Assembly

By M. CHALAPATHI RĀV, M.A., B.L.

India's Parliament, as constituted, is like a Shavian burlesque on all the Parliaments of the world. The Legislative Assembly is tired of its verbose and superfluous existence ; and the Council of State is not even a good caricature of the average Upper House. But the Assembly which was presided over by Patel, and which was the third of its series, will for a long time bear the palm for wit and oratory, for fun and fireworks. It marked the apex of the parliamentary epoch which had been inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught, with appropriate vagueness.

The Third Assembly contained galaxies and constellations and scintillated with the most brilliant stars. There were old men in their seventies and young men in their twenties. There were Swarajists in fanciful frock-coats rattling off in an Oxford accent and Executive Members smiling gently like genial Babus. There were Pandits who quoted from moth-eaten text-books written in the most luxuriant of dead languages and modern wits who recited the latest limericks. They were intrepid and alert, gay and gregarious, these epicure legislators who rose like hardened statesmen to brace up to a paper crisis and moved and talked out adjournment motions with patriotic unconcern. They had their shadow Cabinets and imitation Cabals. They ate good lunches and posed kindly to photographers as often as possible. They remembered the most ancient history and knew by heart the most recent anecdotes ; and if, as Sheridan said of Dundas, they sometimes resorted to their memory for their jokes and to their imagination for their facts, they could show off, as occasion demanded, Balfourian elegance, Asquithian terseness, or Curzonian pomposity. They platitudinized and pot-boiled, they punned and parodied. They celebrated

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the premature death of Diarchy in a funeral of words. The debates of those days would not at all disgrace the House of Commons ; while Patel presided like a Greek god over the garrulous constitution-mongers who in an year or two developed a passion for token cuts. The eloquent speakers sat to each bill as to a banquet, and if there were the inevitable bores who stammered their speeches or droned out their composed music, the members could doze or walk out at will.

There were the Laurel-and-Hardy comics of Kabiruddin Ahmed. There was Muddiman, Home Member and genial ring-master, who pleasantly pooh-poohed those adjournment motions and parodied those token cuts. Blackett could command words as well as he could command figures. Innes could speak crashing rhetoric. Motilal Nehru himself was formidable with his learned ponderosities and long-tailed perorations. Lajpat Rai was lava and brimstone when he was roused. Malaviya could coo for hours and hours going back to the time when Adam delved and Eve span, and Jayakar had a silver tongue which could be sweet or sonorous. Kelkar jewelled his phrases, while Gidney extemporized and hummed and hawed, and Thakurdas could boom away like a bill of lading. Jinnah spoke with glittering polish; Chaman Lall thundered with the proper accent; Goswami erupted with grace and temper; and Shanmukham Chetti talked like the tote. The wise men of the East conversed accusing and applauding one another: the Constitution rocked like a cradle; and Patel presided over his infant Pandemonium with frowns and nods and profound silences.

'The heads of the parties are like the heads of snakes carried on by their tails,' said William Pulteney. Andit Motilal Nehru, with all his princely hauteur, did not ignore the importance of the tail. He fostered his followers with loving pride and care. He took a god-fatherly interest in the brilliant triumvirate of debaters, Chaman Lall, Goswami and Chetti, whose interest in politics, however, has been more Platonic than practical. The Deputy Leader of the Party,

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Srinivasa Iyengar, had astounded his countrymen by his hurricane career. He went to the Assembly with a reputation for strategy, for he had out-generalled the powerful communal party in Madras and given it a ghastly defeat. At his worst, he revealed the 'very ambiguity of ambiguity,' but he added his quota to the gaiety of the proceedings by his breezy manner and scintillating wit. He had a love for forcing events and making history; but history grew out of his control; it went with a headlong crash from incident to incident. While some of the Swarajists distinguished themselves during question hour, there were others who remained ornamental for the most part, for, just as some gentlemen prefer blondes some Swarajists prefer jails. It is not that they cannot talk or think. They have courage but no convictions. It was not so, however, with Jamnadas Mehta, of whom it is impossible to say whether he is a comrade becoming a millionaire or a millionaire becoming a comrade. He had a massive personality, added to a matchless wit; the one organized strikes, the other laughed at them. He spoke like an oracle on high finance, and counteracted the clear-headed but morose leadership of N. M. Joshi, whose is a model bourgeois career. Ranga Iyer was the champion gossipier; he denounced the Government from his seat in the Chamber and made up for it by his sweetness in the lobbies.

Lala Lajpat Rai was the most manful and lion-hearted of our leaders. He had led the Nationalist Party successfully against the Swarajists in Northern India, and left bitterness behind him. It is unfortunate that our leaders cannot expand within the bounds of foreign domination: but, if we are permitted to compare without being charged as parallel-hunters, we may say that Lajpat Rai had the bravery and brusque picturesqueness of Garibaldi. He always spoke as man to man, without seeking parenthesis or pot-boiled epigrams. Pandit Malaviya had battled restlessly for his country, with copious eloquence, with all the weight of his moderation and culture, without betraying either bitterness or humour. He flung his precise metallic sentences in pro-

fusion. If ' Gladstone's eloquence was calorific and Balfour's circumforaneous,' Malaviya's eloquence was both calorific and circumforaneous. He was, according to Montagu, 'the most active politician in any council,' 'a man of beautiful appearance, a Brahmin clad in white, with a beautiful voice, perfect manners, and an insatiable ambition.' If Lajpat Rai was passion, and Malaviya was rhetoric, Jayakar was all argument. He, like Sapru, has since won fame as a part of our political Gemini. He has the gritty appearance of a dictator; but he has monumental suavity and manners, and a scholar's love for books; he is a kind of Baldwin, without pipe or pigs. He is our grand collaborator. He collaborated with Kelkar for responsive co-operation. He collaborated with Moonjee for regenerating Hinduism. He collaborated with Gandhi for social reform and Sapru for political reform. But his career is woefully incongruous because, while he has admitted the attractiveness of the palm, he has never liked to be soiled with the dust. He is the embodiment of the musty old maxim that speech is silver and silence golden. If a man like Austen Chamberlain has suffered from the greater fame of his father, a similar thing may be said of Kelkar, whose own contribution has been overshadowed by the gorgeous fame of Tilak. He wrote and spoke with persuasive wit. He coined metaphors that smack of literature and humour that is caustic. He is best remembered as the most enduring relic of Tilak: it is as though a temple were built over the tooth of the Buddha.

'Jinnah is a clever man,' noted Montagu in his Diary 'and it is an outrage that such a man should have no chance of running the affairs of his country.' Jinnah's life has been a commentary on this sentence: and it is, like similar lives in India, a life of futility. He had started his career in a blaze of idealism. He held out the promise of developing into a kind of Younger Pitt; and Sarojini Devi, in an ecstasy of vision, had prophesied that he had all the makings of a Mazzini for India. But he would not follow the consequences of his own ruthless logic; and except for a beauty of pose and

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an unfailing dignity of manner, he did not keep the promise of his early years. The Younger Pitt has behaved like the elder Tadpole; Sarojini Devi no longer practises the dangerous game of prophesying; he has become, as what Sapru called, a spoilt child; and disastrously enough for everybody, his brilliant qualities of analysis and dramatic impersonation made him a superb advocate of lost causes. He suffers from too high a sense of self-respect. He cannot woo like Sastri or kotow like Patro. His heart is neither with a country which has changed beyond the most daring of his dreams, nor with a Government which has no seat to offer him. He is too lordly to be anybody's minor colleague. Jinnah's greatness is that, in a nation of orators, he is not an orator. He is too self-conscious for that. But he is a born debater of extraordinary power. His speeches are models of expostulation. They are full of gestures and other minor graces. He is not witty or rasping in riposte: but he is grave, dignified, and studiedly sincere. The President must only give him time to perambulate from point to point, from irony to invective, from invective to prophecy, and he can score at every turn with crushing retorts and clinching perorations. We can even now read his speech on Steel Protection with thrills, and admire the stubbornness with which he defended himself and the Government against a pack of howling patriots. His interventions always enlivened the proceedings with drama. He expostulated to the Government, he turned towards the Swarajists, he bandied words with the back-benchers, he warned, he threatened, he prophesied. It was done with glitter and polish: his victory was pyrrhic but it soothed his self-respect: he again and again proved his importance in the scheme of things by attacking the Government and voting for them: and, after all, he celebrated the superiority of Mahomed Ali Jinnah. It was, however, not easy for him to keep pace with Thakurdas, who spoke with punch. Thakurdas had audacious duels with Blackett: his speeches were remarkable for their matter-of-fact openings, their reasoned argument, their relay of impressive facts, and

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their inevitable conclusions. Jinnah's centre party was effective, not only because it was a centre party but also because it was led by a superb politician, who took to politics as ducks take to water.

'How imperfectly did mountains exist before Wordsworth,' writes Aldous Huxley; and we may say with equal truth that Parliamentary life in India since Patel has been imperfect, if not extinct. Patel gave the Assembly a character which it had lacked and an advertisement which it ardently aspired for. There was nothing very remarkable about his pre-Presidential work. He was a Congress member who wanted provincial autonomy, a Mayor of the Bombay Corporation who showed a fist of mail, and a member of the local Council and then of the Assembly who often contradicted himself.' But he was made of the stuff of which good ginger is made, and Montagu had to commend him in his Diary as 'obviously the most talkative member of the Council.' Patel, like the age in which he lived, despised rhetoric and applauded invective. Force of assertion, says Bernaud Shaw, is the alpha and omega of style, and Patel did nothing but assert. He resembled one of those Greek figures, with a face that contained all the elegies in the world, a patriarchal beard, and eyes that were unutterably sad: and when he was re-elected as President a second time unanimously, he took the Chair like bearded Jove amidst thunders and lightnings and forebodings of constitutional cataclysms.

The Third Assembly started with a sensation. Motilal Nehru moved an adjournment motion about the detention of S. C. Mitra and raised the question of the privileges of the members of the House. But Muddiman came out with his 'thrice-told tales' about the dangerous virtues of detenus and mythical terrorist societies for which India is gaining an undeserved reputation. Then they plunged into the bloodless battle of the ratios, and member after member tirelessly discussed the behaviour of the rupee. The vote on the 'Executive' Demand provided the best fun of the session. Patel declared amidst laughter that 'Mr. Jayakar

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wanted to reduce it to one rupee, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar wanted to reduce the demand to six pies, Mr. Kelkar to three pies, and Mr. Acharya to one pie.' Jayakar was bitter that 'even the carpet expense was non-votable,' and warned the Government to 'beware of the anger of a weak man.' Kelkar expressed the paradox of the situation pithily when he said: 'Yesterday we were asked to vote for 1s. 6d. because it was a *de facto* ratio. Today we are asked to vote for the Government because it is a *de facto* Government!' The Government itself was loth to change its vision because, as one member said, it was afraid of becoming squint-eyed in the effort. The autumn session was comparatively quiet, and the House was busy about the status and privileges of its members, postal employees, and seamen's problems; the Government had some hair-breadth escapes: and bills like the Indian Divorce Bill were passed even without discussion.

Lord Birkenhead had brought in the rollicking spirit of Bolingbroke into twentieth century politics. He would not brook inferior intellect. His arrogance was invincible, and his apathy was such that he would refer to terrible communal riots as mere 'collisions.' He had made much of the fact that the country was tired of 'the sterile and reactionary character of the creed of the rigid Swarajist,' and that a number of the new members had come in 'as followers of their own individual consciences.' He declined to be 'the slave of a date,' and left to his successors a frightful heritage in the Simon Commission. The times were distinctly inauspicious. The country was showing unparalleled petulance. Katherine Mayo had become the most famous Miss in Christendom, and mud was exchanged between Asia and America. Lord Irwin went on delivering his Methodist speeches. But almost all the Indian leaders were sulky. The Assembly rose to the occasion in a historic debate on the Commission. There was brilliant parrying, and retort and counter-retort. The Opposition delivered themselves of their philippics. There was a jolt when M. C. Rajah seemed to make an ideal of his inferiority complex, or Gour became apocalyptic about the sanctity of

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Statutory Commissions. Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan tried to enlighten the House by concluding that 'no country remained under subjection unless there were defects in national character,' and Crerar declared pompously that 'the issues are too clear, the facts too apparent, the omens too unambiguous.' There was no gap in the relentless Opposition. Blackett twitted that 'Mr. Jinnah has been assimilated by the Congress Party,' but there was not the slightest flutter. Suhrawardy complained bitterly of 'the All India Muslim League session at Calcutta where Pandits harangued.' But the Opposition was overwhelmingly victorious. The credit was due to Jinnah's steadfastness, which was unexpected and unequalled. He had been even steadier on the Army question. 'I do not want the garrison of His Majesty's force to insure me,' he said, 'I want a national army'; and at one time he burst into a passion and announced that 'these yarns won't do.' There were exciting interludes. The co-operation between Jinnah and Motilal Nehru was not always harmonious. When in a subsequent session the National Demand was moved, Jinnah was found saying, 'let us not raise a controversy among ourselves.' 'Who is doing it,' said Motilal; 'you' said Jinnah; 'you' said Motilal; and the House laughed. But towards the close of its hectic life, it was the President who monopolised all the limelight of the House.

Hitherto history had seemed to be the monopoly of Premiers; but Patel showed that it was also the privilege of courageous Presidents. When Sir James Crerar became the Home Member he brought the manners of a tight-laced martinet. Hailey had been eloquent, and Muddiman genial, but Crerar was curt, tidy, and cryptic. He easily disturbed even the harmony of speech-making, and aired his affection for Public Safety Bills. Blackett was witty, though overbearing; Schuster sang the sweetest melodies though they told of saddest budgets; Rainey had a style of making Railways interesting; the Mitras and Mitters were efficient and friendly; but they were all made ineffectual by Crerar's cold blood-curdling recitations. He once more repeated Muddi-

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man's 'thrice told tales.' The relations between the front benches were bitter. The President had to hold the scales between a Government which was too sullen and an Opposition which was too talkative. There were many pitched battles. The President himself was shadowed. Members smelt gun-powder plots; and once Lancelot Graham was the innocent Guy Fawkes. The Assembly resounded with recriminations, and shades of future generations saw the thrilling spectacle of the first elected President making history by his histrionic talents. Patel stood up like Prospero to summon constitutional storms. He summoned them with trumpets and deliberate gusto. He distilled his anger into the most vitriolic damnation of the Government, with a picturesque variation of ambiguous epithets.

Patel behaved like a perpetual crisis. He wielded his sceptre like a birch. Once he chid the Commander-in-chief for not being present to answer a debate. Another time Blackett was heard to mutter something, and he was pulled up and asked to make himself heard. Patel's decisions themselves burst like bomb-shells. He bombed the Reserve Bank Bill. At the time of the Meerut Trial he bombed the Public Safety Bill. The situation was made too thrilling when bombs were thrown into the Assembly and Bhagat Singh became a hero to men of words who admire men of action. The Government were rude. 'In view of the fact that the Government are not prepared to show the Chair the courtesy of disclosing what their plans are, I refrain from giving a ruling,' the President declared. Over the question of their control of the Assembly gallery, he again bombed and won. He, with his usual pluck, refused to follow the Congress resolution asking its members to boycott the legislatures. He explained the position of a President, 'who doffs his vivid party colours, be they buff or blue, crimson or yellow, and wears instead the white flower of a neutral political life.' At the time of the bitter Bardoli crisis, he declared his sympathies a little too openly and bravely. Unkindly critics whispered with bated breath that Patel was seen going home

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in the company of Motilal Nehru, and that the syntax and even the phrases of the President's statements bore the oil and learning of the Pandit. Arthur Moore committed his most blazing indiscretion when he tried to move a vote of no-confidence in the Chair, but the Government preferred to butter its parsnips with elaborate euphemism, and Patel added insult to injury. When he left with a proud shrug the scene of all his political glory, muffled up in all his dignity, it was to the blare of guns and trumpets. He gave himself a hearty send-off, but an embittered Viceroy spoilt the show by ungraceful references and veiled suggestions. It was tragic to see Patel pass from continent to continent in search of health, and the tragedy was complete when, robbed of his health and thunder, a cynic to the core, a fighter to the last, he died in Vienna amidst the dust of empires.

The Third Assembly lingered on, under the Presidentship of Mahomed Yakub. 'The weak man' had shown his anger. The Swarajists had become once more 'rigid,' 'reactionary,' and 'sterile.' Malaviya too was tired of this pantomime and resigned after a time. Jayakar was left to lead the Opposition. As he rose to speak, he declared he was 'the remnant of the old Nationalist Opposition, for the last time to sing the swan song.' The atmosphere was quiet and ghostly. The Simon Commission Report was dragged into discussion: and there were some signs of life. Other minor problems were attended to listlessly; seamen and postal employees were disposed of quickly. The last sitting was devoted to the purchase of the Assam-Bengal Railway. A slight amendment was moved; it was accepted on behalf of the Government; and the sitting was over. The President was tremulous: 'We are at the end of our career!' He desired the time-old honour of shaking hands with the members. He ominously said that he did not 'know how many will come back.' The Assembly was dying. It had tried to make history, which it was beyond its scope and power to make. It struggled for a while, then died, slowly, imperceptibly, unhonoured and unsung.

Some Recent Novels of Tagore

By DR. JAYANTA KUMAR DAS-GUPTA, M.A., Ph.D. (LONDON)

For nearly twelve years after the publication of 'The Home and the World' Rabindranath did not write any novel. Many people thought that the veteran author had given up writing long works of fiction. In 1930 was published Tagore's 'Sesher Kabita' (The Last Poem) which created tremendous enthusiasm in Bengal. It was a good retort of Tagore to the pseudo-realists and sentimentalists. Rabindranath proved that a really good work could be written without sex-craze being made the pivot of the story.

The hero of this novel, Amit Ray, an Oxford man and a Bar-at-Law, was stylish in everything—dress, taste and talk. He had what is called a distinguished air. He showed an interest in women but he was never keen about them. His relatives regarded him as a will-o'-the-wisp. Culture to Amit was not the same thing as it meant to his sisters. On the contrary, he used to speak against everything that was accepted in so-called decent society. Amit always praised new writers, while he would speak in disparagement of older ones. He was perfectly correct when he said: 'Those poets who have no shame to live till sixty or seventy inflict punishment upon themselves by making themselves cheap. Imitators begin to jeer at them from all sides. The quality of their works deteriorates; they have to pilfer from their older works.' People gave up all hopes of Amit and opined that he would pass his life with shadowy things.

At Shillong in Assam, following a motor accident, he met a young lady who changed the course of his life. Amit thought that Labanya (such was the name of this lady) was his ideal woman. Her voice reminded him of the thin smoke of the best Indian tobacco, without the fume of nicotine and with the scent of rose water. Then

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began real life for him. In Labanya's mind there was also a new consciousness. These two seemed to have been made for each other. Amit's love-making was carried on through poetry. They gave each other pet names. But Labanya felt that he would never settle down. To Amit marriage was something vulgar. Literature was more to his taste. So Labanya did not beguile herself with false hopes. She knew that Amit would not be able to retain anything after winning it. She was against her marriage with him, because in marriage nearness might tire him and he would find her totally different from what he had thought her to be. She would better remain in his life as a dream though short-lived. She was in a fix. The stir had come into her heart and she wanted to say that she loved, that her life, her world, had become perfect with the touch of love. Eventually it was settled that she should marry Amit.

Destiny, however, worked in another way. To Shillong came Amit's sister Sissy with her friend Ketty, an erstwhile sweetheart of Amit at Oxford. Labanya persuaded Amit that it was proper for him to accept Ketty. Thus they separated and all that remained of their association was happy memory. She passed out of his life as suddenly as she had entered it. The remembrance of that which had vanished out of her life, ere it could become a reality, did not pain her. On the contrary, the memory of the past was to her a priceless treasure. Labanya is the symbol of the eternal feminine who kindles a fire in the heart of man and makes his existence a poetic thing.

'Sesher Kabita' is partly a picture of ultra-modern society. Amit's sisters smoked cigarettes. In everything, they are apart from the women that Rabindranath has depicted in his previous novels. They dance, drive cars, mix freely with men, sit on the arms of their chairs, and call men 'naughty.' They belong to a society which regards gossip as table-talk, smartness as fashion, Bohemianism as life, and their gay and light-hearted life is evident from the rustle of their silk saris and the brilliance of their meaningless chatter. Here Tagore

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is in one of his best satirical veins. Yet Labanya, Jogamaya, Sobhanlal and Jati Sankar belong to an altogether different society, the more conservative branch of Bengali life.

'Sesher Kabita' is not to be judged as an ordinary novel. It is poetry and fiction mixed together. It could have been made shorter, because there are occasions when it becomes slightly monotonous in spite of its graceful style and poetic idealism. 'Sesher Kabita' does not possess the larger background of 'Gora' with its complex problems. It is a love-story pure and simple. The psychological complexities of 'The Home and the World' are absent from it. It might have been the swan-song of a distinguished literary career, yet it is not the last contribution of Tagore to modern fiction.

Strictly speaking 'Dui Bon' (The Two Sisters) which came in 1933 is more like a short story. The characters are few in number. The complication in the plot arises from Sasanka's infatuation for his sister-in-law Urmimala. The real interest of the book is to be found in Tagore's depiction of two different types of woman—the 'mother type' and the 'lover type.' Sasanka's wife Sarmila, who was older of the two sisters, belonged to the former type, while Urmimala belonged to the latter class. The 'lover type' of woman charms and fascinates man but the motherly woman sustains him till the end, and she is strong in will and character. The former is impulsive, while the latter is firm, and she thus saves Sasanka's life from wreck in every sense of the word. Of the two men, Sasanka, who is an engineer by profession, is more manly, but the physician Nirod is a sham. In fact, he is utterly despicable. He talked big but his selfish nature could not long be hidden.

'Malanche' (The Flower Garden) which was published early in 1934 contains three main characters—Aditya, Niraja and Sarala. Here also is the same complexity in Aditya's wedded life as we find in that of Sasanka. Once he had loved Niraja very much and for ten years their love was the envy of friends. But with her illness everything was changed. Sarala had been his beloved years ago and the old love returned after many years. To save the situation Sarala went

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to prison as a picketer. But she was let off. Niraja wanted to see her married to Aditya, but just before her death she became unusually excited and hastened her end. Both these stories are weak. Their themes are curiously similar. The end in both is a patched-up affair. There is nothing remarkable in them excepting the style; but in a novel, surely, the style is not everything.

With the publication of 'Char Adhyaya' (The Four Chapters) towards the end of 1934, a furore was created in certain circles in Bengal which regard it unfortunate on the part of Rabindranath to have referred to a person who is no longer able to defend himself. It is certainly unfair to expose to the public ear something which was confided to Rabindranath in private by a man who is dead. 'To speak or write lightly of departed genius is offensive,' remarks a great thinker, and this act of indiscretion many people are not inclined to overlook as an instance of poetic license. The novel would have suffered in no way had the great writer discreetly left out the reference to the dead soul.

Politics forms an important ingredient of this novel. This is not the first time that Tagore has touched politics in his novels. Both 'Gora' and 'The Home and the World' contain references to political events. In fact, in this work he shows once more the futility of what he regards as subversive methods, as he had done previously in 'The Home and the World.' But while in that novel he was to some extent timorous, here he is far more frank and outspoken. In the intervening years he has grown more pronounced in his views. The background of 'The Four Chapters' is the Terrorist Movement—that subterraneous and insidious current of life which has cast a slur on the fair name of Bengal, both in and outside India. The Movement receives the treatment that it rightly deserves and is exposed in all its horridness and luridity. We are, of course, more concerned with it as a work of art than anything else.

In the introductory chapter, or more accurately speaking, in the prelude to the story, we come across Ela who is the

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heroine of the novel. In the writer's own words, she is the herald of the new age. Other characters gradually come in—Indranath, Atin, the hero, camp-followers like Kanai, etc. Indranath was a scientist, but somehow or other he formed an antipathy for the ruling class. Yet he regarded the English as the best of the Western nations. He was of opinion that the Englishman was spoiling himself by bearing other people's burden. Indranath fretted against the stunted manhood of his country oppressed with servility. To be able to die like a hero was more to his taste. Yet he revelled in secret activities. Was this not an anomaly? He was the high-priest of the order of death and destruction. It is against that order that Rabindranath raises his voice of condemnation and he mercilessly lashes it.

Atin is a tragic figure. He is a failure in life. He was never a wholehearted anarchist. He wavered between a settled family life and a nomadic, uncertain existence. Atin regarded love as something barbarous and uncivilised but Ela would not marry him. She hesitated to drag him into the confusion of everyday life. She would rather have him as her ideal man than see him as an insignificant person in her daily life. In this hesitation of Ela there lay the tragedy of their lives. Atin revolted against what he regarded as the 'Car of the Juggernaut of patriotic duty.' In this remark some critics have scented a gibe at some well-known political figure and a great national organisation. The poet or the thinker might not care for cheap popular applause, but when some thing or some one that stands high in the public estimation is concerned, it is wise to avoid any kind of misunderstanding. But probably Tagore was actuated by the idea that no great institution or no great man is above criticism.

The confederacy organised by Indranath disintegrated. Internal causes contributed to its decay and disruption. Atin was at the end of his tether. To the wretched hiding place where he was living as a rat in its trap came Ela, and the mess that they had made of their lives became apparent to them. Atin felt that his life had been in vain and that what was

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regarded as nationalism and patriotism in his country was an utter negation of truth. The last meeting of these two who had always wanted each other, and whom nature had meant for one another, is extremely poignant. Atin confessed that he had committed the worst crime by stifling his own nature. 'Life is a forgerer, it wants to copy the handwriting of eternal time,' said he. The conclusion of the novel is tragic, no doubt, but the heroine, contrary to her usual self-confidence, is hysterical, thus revealing her weak woman's nature.

Considered from the artistic point of view, 'The Four Chapters' stands far above its two immediate predecessors—'Dui Bon' (The Two Sisters) and 'Malancha' (The Flower Garden). In 'The Four Chapters' there is practically no story element, the characters few in number,—a device that it shares in common with the two novels just mentioned,—the language is rhythmical, and there is a sense of compactness, a brevity in descriptions and an avoidance of all unnecessary details. Not being large in structure it is always constant in the reader's mind, and it satisfies the standard required of a complete and rounded work of art.

Mr. Bendre and His Poetry

By PROF. V. K. GOKAK, M.A.

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In the preceding sections,¹ I dealt with the poetical aspects of the modern Kannada Renaissance and presented the poetry of Mr. Bendre against a very picturesque background. I will now confine myself to an examination of the intrinsic qualities of his poetry.

In 'The song of the Unemployed' Bendre speaks of the relations of art to society :

Now that the world is chained in gold
Shall we not be quick and bold
To set it free? We will likewise
Bring away from paradise
The tree of plenty, bread and food,
And plant it here, aye, for good.
Till then all song's a cry, a dread:
'Bread! Give us our daily bread!'

There can be no real art till society is a fraternity, a brotherhood of emancipated and self-sufficing men. But there is also the relation of art to itself and to the self of man. He says elsewhere :

The river shall fountain forth
Born of the gestures of joy,—
The Milky Stream of radiant love
And faith none can destroy.

And in those holy waters
The soul a plunge will take,
And with conch-throated ease
Transcendent music make.

¹ The earlier sections were published in *Triveni* for July-Aug. 1934

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It will build the world anew
With *Om* and with *Amen*
And with new oracles
Bless us indeed, poor men.

Ripeness in inward life and harmony and peace in the outward,—these are essential if great art is to flourish. It is fortunate for Kannada poetry that these ideals should be held high at the present time.

Bendre confesses, in ‘The Song of Every Day,’ that conception and expression change with the ages, adjusting themselves to new spiritual needs. But in his ‘Four-fold Beauty’ he tells us, after the manner of Kanakadasa of Karnataka and Sri Aurobindo, that Beauty, the ideal of all poets, can always be approached in one or the other of its four forms,—sensuous, imaginative, intellectual and spiritual.

This vision of Beauty in its four manifestations leads the poet very often to the altar of high aspiration. He yearns to attain the very peaks of Olympus, but is satisfied with his own place in the scheme of things, because all fractions lose their meaning when the integral factor is an Infinite Whole. Ambition knows no end. It is the Child dancing on the shoulders of Age in ceaseless progression.

Bendre starts with a clear sense of the necessity of objectivity in art. ‘Leave my sufferings and my delights to me. But I will give you the poetry of my pain, the melody of my mirth. And if your heart melts at the strains like sugar-crystals, will you not permit me to taste its sweetness?’ He tries to learn the lesson of comradeship in weal and woe and to realise the truth of the remark that the poet is the least poetical of all human beings. But he does not forget the fact that it is only out of the labours of the spirit that song can be fashioned. Poetry were but gossamer in air unless it is strengthened by seership. And in his quest after a newer life he falls back on Inspiration. He feels it in his heart that remembrance of *Prakruti* is his inspiration, and her image the theme of his song. In such inspired moments he finds the joy of it all descend on him in a flood. And he feels

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that words can only profane his meaning. He is overwhelmed with the sight of sublimity in Nature. Standing on the banks of the Ganges he exclaims: ‘How can ever one compose a song comprehending the river which even Siva’s head could not compose?’ *

Coupled with this inexpressible joy of aesthetic experience is the delight he feels in the age-old traditions of Kannada poetry and in the innovations with which he and others are enriching them. It is self-expression in his mother-tongue alone that can quench the thirst of the poet. The poetic tradition of his Motherland must flow in his veins. And he reminds the Karnataka goddess of the fact that it was only yesterday that the Tungabhadra made the rocks blossom into domes and cupolas. Can she not once more minister the milk of paradise to the tongue that is lifeless?

All these strands of thought are gathered into one complex whole in the lyrical ode called ‘Oh! Song.’ It begins as a meditation on art and rises into the domain of supramental life. It is also a fulfilment of the very desire it voices forth. Here are the opening and the concluding stanzas:

Into the bright sky of my mind
A cloud its way doth gently find.
Enthroned on it is a maiden fair
And in tresses falls her hair.
With meaning looks of glad surmise,
Like twinkling stars, she beams surprise.
And like a tender lotus-bud
Half-opened in the morning’s flood
Of light, her mouth she opens slow.
What songs, what chants from it would flow
To captivate the weary world?
I have come in sorrows hurled,
For your benison I long:
Give it me, oh Song ! oh Song !

* * * *

As when a mother lulls to sleep
Her child when it doth wake and weep,
So did you ease my troubled mind

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With ministrations gentle, kind.
And it was you who sang the strain
That echoed in my soul's domain
And lingers even now. All verse
Doth spring from you and I rehearse.
My tongue were but a nurse whose worth
Lies in waiting on your birth.
Could it be otherwise, oh Song !
Song ! Oh ! Song !

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This is the poetry that Bendre has produced while tracking Inspiration on its way. I will now take to his other poems. A consideration of his plays, critiques and the forewords with which he has introduced most of the young poets of North Karnataka to the Kannada public, would overburden this article. I will now summarise the technical aspects of his poetry and then pass on to its substance and significance.

His style is rich and diverse. There is the imaginative wealth of his love-poems, the traditional idiom of his spiritual lyrics, the grandeur of classical style in the sonnets, the rhetorical fire of poems like 'The Stomach,' and the colloquial idiom of the pastoral lyrics. In a lyric like 'The Dance Eternal,' all these diverse currents meet in one great confluence. He uses certain age-old words with an appropriateness that brings them back to life. And in his use of *nal*, *tay*, *ta* etc., he has traced Kannada roots to their mystic essences as 'A. E.' has done with Sanskrit words in 'The Candle of Vision.'

His method of presentation results in intricate harmony. Almost every poem turns on some elaborate pattern of meaning as well as of language. And he has introduced many innovations. One is *Nalvari* or the four-fold lyric illustrated by 'Four-fold Beauty' and 'Young Ambition.' It consists of four stanzas in *Shalpadi* metre, each of them illustrating successively one of the four aspects of Beauty manifest in the theme. There are also lyric-sequences like 'Kama Kasturi'; and two long poems, 'Krishnakumari' and 'Moorti.' The

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first has almost a labyrinthine design. And both illustrate the contention of Herbert Read that a long poem is essentially a complex harmony of many moods.

Perhaps the most interesting technical development in his recent poetry is the humorous variation he has played on 'Futurism' and 'Imagism.' Here is given the rendering of what can be called a 'featuristic' lyric. The lines in ordinary type are the real poem. In the italicised lines the poet himself has given us the interpretation of the movements :

IMAGE

- Cheek resting on hand.....
(The lover is out and away to a distant land!)
The palm bent on the brow.....
(Is he coming now by the palm-row?) .
Finger on chin.....
(She finds at last the heart that hers did win !)
Arms outspread.....
(The severed halves do meet as one and wed !)
Smiles and sobs.....
(The warp and woof of love that ceaseless throbs !)

It is not necessary to enumerate his metrical and stanzaic innovations in this connection. Most of the traditional metres are employed, but always with fine adjustments. And in his Miltonic sonnet on the Sonnet, he makes a point as remarkable as those found in Wordsworth and Rossetti ('A gay myrtle-leaf,' 'A moment's monument'): 'The eyes are indeed two; but the vision is always one.' There are certain radical changes introduced into the structure of the sonnet itself. Folk-tunes and balladic tunes find a place as well as the *ragas* employed in devotional lyrics. There is the fierce and unredeemed flight of poems like 'Behind a Corpse,' the powerful free verse of 'Narabali' and the poetic prose of 'Karulina Vachanagalu' and other prose-poems.

This music of his is the very delicate mansion of his lovely imagery. His muse is decked up in rainbow splendour. The imagery is cosmic, grotesque or delicate, as suits the content. Here is an instance of delicate imagery :

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I have a longing all the while
To reach the haven of deep-blue skies
And lie down on the gossamer pile
Of pillowry clouds and quite despise
The very remembrance of pain
And be the being of bliss again !
Against the moon's I would lean my cheek
Though it be grown so wan, and seek
A similar paleness in his cheek.

This mastery over imagery is very often displayed over the extent of whole poems in creating the atmosphere suited to the dominant mood. And the mood, again, gets distilled into a symbol. As S. Krishna Sharma of Hyderabad has remarked, and as Prof. V. Seetharamia also pointed out independently, 'The realm of symbolism in Kannada poetry belongs peculiarly to Mr. Bendre.' His poetry is a storhouse of symbols. Literally every poem traces its theme to the root where it takes on a symbolic character. Allegory supports the symbolism in 'Moorti' and stands by itself in 'Mysore,' where Mr. D. V. Gundappa, Prof. B. M. Srikanthia and 'Srinivasa' are referred to as Space, Wind and the Pole-star. But this is purely occasional. Whether inward or outward, life is always, in his eyes, a big procession of symbols.

I may just refer to some of the types of symbolism persistent in his poetry. Nature and love come in for a large share. 'The Butterfly' puts on the colour of temptation. 'Morning' becomes symbolic of peace. The reflection of one mirror in another and of each other's image in each other's eyes are images which symbolise infinity for the poet. He sometimes draws his symbols from the world of visions, as when his body itself becomes a tongue symbolising upward aspiration. In 'Sachidananda' and some other lyrics, he has contented himself with traditional symbolism.

Sometimes the process becomes cosmic as in 'The Bird of Time,' 'The Stomach,' 'The Dance Eternal,' 'Narabali,' 'The Sword of Life,' 'Blind Gold Is A-dancing,' 'Annavatara'

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and 'Earth the Girlish Wife.' It were better to refer to 'Moorti' or 'Icon,' symbolic of the soul. The first part deals with the endless vistas opened by the Infinite Being and emphasises the lesson for the scientist that 'None ever beheld Truth; Truth is incomprehensible.' The second part describes the rock formation on earth and of that quarry out of which the Icon (named the Beautiful), the hero of the poem, is to be hewn. The third part reveals a monarch dreaming of a big temple with a lovely image enshrined in it. In the fourth, the artist sets forth in search of fine rock with instructions from the king and comes across the destined piece of stone. He chisels it into shape and the stone takes on the lineaments of his vision. He dies as his work is completed. In the fifth part, the Image is seen to be a many-faceted work of art, comprising all the nine *rasas* and more. It is set up in the temple. And in the sixth is described the far-famed glory of the Icon, how devotees gathered at its shrine from far and near and realised their dreams with the inspiration of their own aspirations. But in the seventh part the end draws near. Decadence has set in. The temple has become a market-place. The Image itself is buried in gold. And the priests are tyrannising in its name. The nautch-girls are there to lure the worshippers from the Image. And the inevitable end of it all sweeps over it in the eighth part. An iconoclast besieges the temple, drawn by the lure of gold, and shatters the Image to pieces. The dream of the monarch, the form shaped forth by the artist and the love lavished by worshippers, are all done into dust. And the poem closes with the famous utterance: '*Rasa* is *janana* or birth; *virasa* or the absence of it is *marana* or death; and *samarasa* or perfect harmony alone is life.'

It is apparent how very essential this symbolism is. The stone that becomes an image for a time and then relapses into its original shape, becomes a symbol of the soul and its passing pilgrimage through the world. It may also stand for a theory of art or a movement in art, commenting on its origin and growth, its relations to society and its inevitable

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decay. Or it may signify the building and unbuilding of empires. One remembers the saying of Yeats that the meaning of a symbol can never be exhausted!

It is their capacity for silent and intense suffering that distinguishes his heroines. And in this capacity Mother Earth beats them all. There is Bharati, the mother of 33 crores of human beings and more, trying to learn her lesson at the feet of Earth. And there is Karnataka Devi, the Queen Cathleen of Bendre, needing sacrifice on the part of her children but asking for it only on demand. Then there are the women 'Sitting like Patience on a monument' in their domestic sphere: the mother who lost her suffering child while she slept and the unfortunate wife distracted with the indifference of her husband. Above all, there is the Rajput maiden, Krishnakumari, made to drink poison like Socrates, though it be for beauty, not truth. She revolts against her fate in the beginning. She passes through a bitter mood of cynicism and disillusionment. And she consents to her fate after having transcended the *trigunas*. She overcomes death by accepting it.

Bendre's heroes, on the other hand, are great aspirants who typify effort, the adamant hardness of the human will. Viswamitra who sits down to penance again after his affair with Menaka, the parrot that beats its wings ceaselessly in the void to secure a footing, the young volunteer of *Ahimsa Vrata* who, torn betwixt doubt and despair in prison, persists in his principle and is liberated the very next moment he is reconciled within himself,—all these have made up their mind, like Ulysses, 'To strive and not to yield.'

These are the pilgrims and seekers. But there are the victors of life belonging to either sex. If *Chinta*, Winter and *Shravana*, please or displease the human mind and play with it like Puck and Titania, there are the goddesses who deserve our worship—Shakti in her triple manifestation, Bhuvaneshwari who blessed Vidyaranya the empire-builder, and Ganga greater than any of the ten Incarnations, for she still favours humanity with her sacred presence. And there

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are also heroes in different spheres of life: sages like Allama and Gandhi, militant seers like Agastya, Vidyaranya and Shradhananda, and poets like Ratnakara and Pampa the soldier-poet.

Perhaps the loveliest of all the symbols in Bendre's poetry is the smile of Buddha. We know little of the sculptor who conceived and presented Buddha with that faint flicker of a smile on his lips. But the poet knows what the sculptor meant and describes the smile thus :

'Tis but a likeness of the Dream Divine
Envisaged by the Peace of Buddha when
It sat in penance on the Everest
Of Buddha's Grief and glimpsed it in the cave
Of contemplation deep; the only blossom
That ev'r the tree of joy bore on its bosom.'

Very rarely has the poet made himself the explicit theme of his song except in poems which were written to represent the crises in his life: 'Will,' 'Invocation to Intoxication,' 'Destiny' and 'Augur Well, Oh! Bird of Omen.' But friendship is one of his important themes. There are poems interpreting the inward life of friends and others in which he defines the spirit of friendship. A friend is a *keelavatari*. He would be mother and beloved to his soul-mate, praise him or scold him and make him flow in abundance :

Blest were this life indeed if once
A soul did blossom by its side.
What other immortality
For us can ever be descried?

This was the conviction which, later on, developed into the *Geleyara Gumpu*. But he also knows that inward ripeness was quite essential if one was to magnetise a group. And, above all, there is that isolation of spirit which makes man essentially a lonely pilgrim. He tells the parrot of his own soul :

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Higher still and higher
As on thy way thou springest,
No friend nor fellow-traveller
With thee thou ever bringest.

And in 'The Lyric of Life' he tells us how the Idea comes riding in all its grace on Imagination, the bumble-bee, and forms and dissolves groups in wonderful succession, just to steal the spirit of man for further endeavour. And yet, to friends who complain of parting, he would say that no barriers can ever rise between souls which even lives could not lead astray.

But love is naturally a wider theme and affords large scope for dramatic study. In two lyric-sequences of pastoral love, he gives us the generalised expression of a complete experience of love in its normality. There is the first flush of love when the magnetic lady on the river-bank watches the needle-like stripling swimming in the river; or as when the youth is enamoured of the peacock of a royal smile riding high on the face of his beloved. The youth brings for his beloved an ear of sweet basil ('Kamakasturi') and would be satisfied even if she were to wear it in her hair and if he could catch the tale of its fragrance carried by a gentle gust of wind. He follows her, at a distance, when she goes to fill her pitcher in the lake. There is mutual love, agitation of heart, long waiting, vain remembrance, parting and regret. Then there is reunion, marriage, *samsara*. The young husband finds *Rati* in his beloved; there is perennial spring in her arms; her very touch is a fountain of joy; she is a veritable mine of precious children, the lady of his Dream. And so he sets sail in the pleasure-boat of marriage on the quixotic quest of domestic felicity. And what do the stars say? They assemble in the sky, as usual; and the night has a twinkle in its eye!

Then, as is inevitable, sets in disillusionment. He remembers in vain the smile that lit the proud face of his beloved when he met her by the river-side. Was it a dream that he saw the smile riding on a mirage? Was it a myth

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that her smile flashed like the lightning glance of monsoons? Where *could* have vanished the lustre from her eyes, the radiance from her face, and the cherry-red ripeness from her lips? Her beauty has been baked in the oven of life, crucified on the altar of poverty.

Desperate and woebegone, the husband beseeches his beloved to forget her sorrow and smile for once, that he may do the same. Both wealth and poverty are evanescent. But the joy of heart endures for ever. Let her not lose this only oar in the sea of life. The beloved understands him and smiles indeed, but what a smile! She endeavours to bury her infinite sorrow in a smile. But the lover is too clever to be pleased. Is he fool enough not to see through this game? Can real sorrow be screened away by building the Taj over the tomb of the beloved? And thus drags on the tale of endless misery; so much so that love takes on the ghastly colour of the anarchic dance of Siva and Parvati in Kailasa and the soul sinks into a swoon, unnerved at the sight.

But then the poet suddenly gives up playing fiddler to sorrow and takes his cue from the Dance Eternal. Even the crow dances out of joy, though it owns not a single peacock-feather. Our dearest may die and our nearest may weep in misery. But what does it matter? The Dance is the thing. This life is a mere illusion, an inexplicable riddle, a going by the same door from which we came. Let us be at rest for once and turn our eyes within. Let us dance in reckless measure and outbid the winds in freedom. Let us entwine our arms, unite in embrace and whirl about in a dance royal like Spring's. Let us sway our heads as the serpent sways its hood, and move with the agility of lightning and the ecstasy of the potter's wheel.

And is this Dance all for man? No, says the poet. The hills will keep time with mad approval and the valleys resound with delight. Earth and ocean will take up the burden and throw themselves into the magnificent Dance. There is not a spot in creation where the Dance is not going on! Grassy lawns, standing lakes and star-sown skies,—all are a party to

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it. The Dance knows no end save itself. And it is limitless. It is the only course left open to man. Why not dance, then, to the tune of days and nights? The orchestra of lives past will strike the chorus and Time will be the spectator. Life and death are annihilated. Earth has embraced the sky. Let us, then, dance like the waves of the immortal sea of joy! Let our bliss fountain forth to all the worlds living and yet to be.

In another poem the poet sees marriage as a period of spiritual probation for human souls. And the fact that two persons of different sexes should be made to cling to each other through life is in itself an object of intense wonder. The conflict between love and lust is, perhaps, one of the most momentous in life. The poet grapples with it in a series of poems entitled 'To—' and lays bare his conception of beauty in Woman.

But love is not only the sympathy which has its basis in sex. Man and Woman meet in manifold relations and these, in turn, open up the infinity of the spirit :

Unceasing fount of love ! oh mother mine !
Oh sister ! Home of peace and rest and love !
Ministering angel ! that will starlike shine,
Gleaming with happy graces from above !
Belov'd ! Incarnate Love ! My star ! my wife !
Daughter ! Oh nursling of my heart and life !
When bare existence did my spirit wither
And life was all a starless, moonless gloom,
With healing hands of love you travelled hither
And made my wintry heart to burst in bloom.

When with my wandering mind, in this dull world
I roamed bewildered, stricken with dumb pain,
You came as Inspiration and unsurled
Your noblest visions, crooned your loving strain
Into my ears. Friend of the smiling moon !
To one in darkness, to the soul in swoon,
You came as Peace and Quiet ; spreading free,
Oh ! bright companion of my eager eyes !
The only ministration that could be
A coverlet of sleep ev'n as the skies !

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In bounty of the spirit you became
The myriad waves of ocean : Kindliness,
Remembrance, Beauty, Hope and Love and Fame,
Patience, Affluence and Friendliness,
And rocked with them my heart that is a-tremble !
Woman ! Immortal youth that doth resemble
Eternity ! You free us from the thrall
That men call death and ev'n as Mother Earth
You spread your healing arms and bless us all :
I bring to you my song of little worth !

As in the image of a mirror found
Reflected in a mirror, as in eyes
That gaze on one another spirit-bound
And find in each their selves reflected rise,—
So doth Infinity attend our ways
And knit us two together all our days !
Yes ! On the moonlight-loom of our own mind
Great Weaver, Love, eternally doth bend !
She twists our hearts as yarn and has designed
A cloth still woven and without an end !

Before I pass on to the next topic, I must just introduce the reader to the poet's skit on 'Modern Indescribable Beauty' in which he very cleverly plays off modern fashions against the ancient traditions of poetry :

Squint or blind, how can I stint
Myself to glorify the tint
Of your eyes when fast you wear
Of darkened spectacles a pair ?

* * *

I may describe your pearly tooth
But are these teeth your own, forsooth ?
I might well your cheeks have painted
Were they not with paint anointed !
As for your feet, they have undone
Either the poet or the sun
For when the shoes conceal your feet,—
Both of them must own defeat !

* * *

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We poets cannot lend a shade
Of colour to your form, Oh maid !
When you have done yourself the paint,
All colour we devise is faint !

If love is all a mystery and a wild desire to the poet, the child is always an object of delight and wonder. There is a remarkable sequence of prose-poems expressing the love of a young mother for her child. She wonders at his closed fist and dreams that it may hold untold treasures in its grasp. She compares him to the ten Incarnations. He swims on the ground like Fish and tries to lift the skies with his face like the Boar! He is an *Ardhanariswara*. For, the kindness beaming in his eyes is reminiscent of herself ; while his bold glance reminds her of her husband.

And what of Karnataka, the soil in which these children are to grow ? The poet remembers the greatness of her past. Every stone in the land has a story to tell. And the ruins of Vijayanagara, the empire of this 'Land of goddesses,' stir him to his depths :

I stood before that land of great renown
Made one with dust by that wild dancer, Time,
In ghastly masquerade, who trampled down
The glory of its name and peerless prime :

Grey, ruined streets and ruined palaces
And ruined glory scattered in the dust,
I saw that home of long-forgotten graces,—
Some food to satisfy Time's heinous lust.

Is this a dream ? Is this the broken heart
Of some high-hearted emperor exiled ?
Of pageantries of clouds the fleeting art ?
Or flower-offerings of charm beguiled ?

Or is it some prostrating, sinful being
Bathed in repentant tears, weeping ov'r wrongs,
Low-lying at the feet of Heaven's King
When some new consciousness his grief prolongs ?

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This is no ruined realm but one to rise
And *Hampi*, dreaming ov'r it, is a sage
That seeks for inspiration to devise
A kingdom new; and when it comes of age,

Stainless and radiant it will endure:
Thus spoke my mind: but ov'r it rose my soul
And said: 'There hangs as yet a mist of lure
And doubt. A mystic riddle is this whole!'

Ev'n as a Master taking by the hand
A novice in the path of *karma*: 'See!
How *karma* degenerate doth often stand!
To righteousness eternal victory!'

To heights of glory this empire risen
By *dharma* and by *karma* so decayed,
Teacheth the lesson of a truth arisen
Out of its dreadful and time-haunted shade!

He speaks of her great poets and would believe that the time is ripe for a similar race of giants to be born in Karnataka. Her literary tradition is waiting in all its neglected grandeur for their coming. Even Nature is consecrated and conserves its beauties for the poets that are to come. This home of mango and jasmine is chosen, indeed, for some divine revelation! Make it once more, he says, the home of seers and prophets. And he sings the cradle-song of the Karnataka child, confident that it is dawn. He dedicates his own life to her service: his body is the pillar on which her mandates can be inscribed. And he calls upon the youths of the land to do the same. The Hero will appear when the people are ready to receive him.

The poet's vision of a Greater Karnataka transcends all barriers. In a sonnet he tells us that the Unification is deemed, at present, to be an impossible project. The Kannada mirror seems to have been shattered to pieces and scattered in all directions. Weeds have strangled the growth of this fair garden. The grandeur that was Karnataka seems now to be a romance turned to stone. And the Hand that can set

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things right is invisible. But the innermost voice of the poet—contained in the sestet of the sonnet—revolts against such pessimism. The dust of the Kannada land may yet be raised on the Milky Way. The Universal Dance may yet be celebrated fittingly in Kannada and set on it the seal of universal renown !

'The Young Volunteer of Ahimsa Vrata,' 'Three And Thirty Crores,' 'Shradhananda' and 'Agastya' are some of the poems which express the stirring of depths that India has felt during recent years. The second poem is a great choric utterance and is the most thrilling of all. In the midst of a shoreless sea, Mother Earth is sitting meditating. Reclining on her lap is Bharati, leaning her face on her right palm. She sings the song of her own distress, gesticulating with her left hand. And countless creatures of various shapes are lying about her in numberless attitudes :

Are these my sons, oh ! mother ; these three and thirty crores ?

Three and thirty crores ! And three and thirty crores !
Are all these my sons, mother, of my blood and bones ?

Say, some are but worm and some blind and infirm,
And others are but sheep and sucklings yet asleep !
Yet manliness is a cipher if I try to decipher
This long account
Of no count :
Three and thirty crores !

Some of them are shattered and most of them are scattered !
Friends they are and brothers but they have their tethers
Of hatred and contempt which make them feel exempt from
speech
Each to each :
Three and thirty crores !

I have but reproduced two of the stanzas in the poem with the refrain. And yet the reader will easily see into its drift and choric design.

Brooding over the destiny of India, the poet is overwhelmed with a sense of her misery and turns his eyes to the

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fabric of Society as a whole on earth. 'Beyond the Margin' presents a complete vision of social and domestic felicity. But it is no fool's paradise, within easy reach. The very foundations of society are laid on a strange universal law,—life feeding on life. Is there no 'other creative and self-protective process?' The sons of Manu are being chased about on earth. Man has made a fool of himself by taking to war and its ways. War is nothing but a barbarous worship of 'Kali.' And yet this blood-thirsty goddess tramples Liberty under foot. She demands the price of death for Liberty, the birthright of humanity. Labour, again, knows no rest. 'The Song of the Unemployed' rises in tremendous chorus. The cry for daily bread almost becomes an invitation to chaos. 'Blind Gold is A-dancing' and trampling life under its heels. The Sea and Earth—man and wife as they are—are mourning over their dying son, the human soul, standing on each side. The ten Incarnations could not solve even the basic problem of food. And Anna-deva—the God of Food—has yet to put in his appearance! 'Annabrahma' or 'The stomach' is empty. 'Nadabrahma' or the heart is silent with anguish. The dome of 'Shabdabrahma' or the brain resounds with endless controversy. The human soul is tired with its suspension in the spider's web of good and evil. The rich are relentless though their barns are full. The gods are nectar-drunk. But the hungry man alone knows the pinch of hunger! Food has become more precious than life. Empty, dead-empty is the stomach of the poor:

And the inmost voice of the poor
Who are half-starved, ill-fed,
Is surging, threatening and thundering
As they are clamouring for bread:
'We'll bury God under the ground
And watch His tomb on our nightly round!
Set fire to creeds of men that rave,
To burn as incense on His grave.
We'll swing the soul into death-knells
And follow them with shrieks and yells.

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Stung into madness by death-dearth,
We'll make a morsel of this earth !'

This meditation on the world-situation draws the poet into a mood of holy dread in a poem called 'Rudra Veena':

I know not why
As days go by
Loud wails the *Rudra* lute
As the soul communes
With its own runes
It sounds and nev'r is mute.

The chords flash,—tremble in splendour ;
And creaks and crashes in thunder
The voice. And sweeping, oh ! wonder !
• The fingers vanish in the sky !
Hairy planets arise.
The planets swim in the skies.
And sun and moon devise
Strange light as Time goes by.

Earth's volcanic again,
The mountains split amain,
And the dykes dam streams in vain
As they slake the red soil.
The seat of justice upturns
And the thrones of kings are urns
And caste and creed returns
Behind the mind's turmoil.

Men and women groan
Labouring and bemoan
The fate that'll be their own
In coming days.
Loth are they to change
But a New Life doth range
Abroad and will estrange
Them from their ways.

If the poet finds thus in Society a state of chaos which is but an intermittent stage in the evolution of humanity, Nature is for him a dome of many-coloured glass, a pageantry of

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splendour. There are charming and familiar descriptions of the *parijata* flower, the bee-hive and the millet-leaf. He sees a dam and exclaims that, like a man of the world, it is levying the toll on the goods (waters) coming from the wild! Nature, is also a background for different themes as in 'Rodana' and 'Ragarati.' But the general process is that of symbolism illustrated already in the preceding section. There is sometimes the motive of contrast, as in 'New Year's Day.' The new year makes everything new but ourselves! Could we but die and resurrect ourselves every day even as we sleep and awaken! Further on, as already referred to, the poet detects lovely mythical existences in Nature: Winter and Sravana, the truant boy who laughs and weeps. Above all, Nature takes on a cosmic beauty in poems like 'The Bird of Time,' 'The Dance Eternal' and 'Earth the Girlish Wife.' In the last he expresses his belief that earth herself will give birth to divinity.

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The intellect may be able to detect problems. But it will not always be able to solve them. It is only in an emotional apprehension of life that all its glories are revealed to man. Many a time has the poet harped on this cult of Beauty in his poems. For joy is the mystery behind creation. Grasp the secret of joy and you will understand God Himself!

And yet the world, sprung from Light, is full of darkness! That is the greatest riddle of all. How could ever joy give birth to Evil? This is the question writ large on the Vedas and on the brows of suffering humanity. The poet tells us in a sonnet how, as a child, he used to play day-long in the streets. His elders would fish him out and take him home to meals at night fall. He would sit in the darkened kitchen, glance up at the chimney that let in a faint streak of light and ask his mother: 'Light was here and everywhere. Whence, then, this darkness that fills the world?' The utterance gains a stabbing irony in retrospective narration.

That is how life becomes a spiritual art. Time and

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Destiny, Sorrow and Bereavement, make of life a mystery-play which God alone can understand. And he would be the Hero who wields 'The Sword of Life' like a true swordsman. And here enters the poet's faith in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. Man is the master and not the servant of life. The soul is the radiant daughter of earth blessed with the love of her mother. And death is only a portal unto brighter birth. The earth is destined to be heaven itself and humanity is only a step towards divinity. The seers like Aurobindo help the Cosmic Evolution by awakening its consciousness in many minds.

But what is to be done in the meanwhile? To receive both good and evil at God's hands with grace:

Never before nor ever after,
Not in the breathing present
Can I admit injustice in Thy scheme.
What comes to my lot
Is just what Thou hast wrought
And the one that I have sought,—
Thy justice supreme.

Well it is if I can know it.
Nor is it worse if I know it not.
I will peer to glimpse it with all my might.
'Tis well for me if I exist
And 'tis well for me if I come to nought
For it is Thou who brought'st me to birth,
Oh! Master of Light!

I watch Thy doings and wait
To see that which may come to pass,
Thy witness to be.
Oh! Knowledge in Essence!
That I may comprehend the same
I submit my very instruments
Of knowledge to Thee.

I do not insist on Thy doing it.
Do or undo as Thou wildest.
I leave it to Thee.
I am silent in my faith

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That, whatev'r Thy deed, Thou art my friend indeed !
Thou art the doer and Thine the deed !
Give me the power to bear and be.

To please God with the life we lead; to live a life of perfect harmony; to forget our own sorrow and lessen that of others; to find compensation in the beauty of the Living Present, of Life and Nature and the dreams of youth; to accost pain which disciplines us into joy; to enter into the lives of others and expand our personality: to adventure into new worlds and never own defeat; to explore life in all its phases; and to dance the Dance Eternal,—that is the burden of the poet's song, the drift of his utterance that is gathering volume and grandeur. God is the great Ploughman and we are the plough and the hoe in His hands. Let us pray to Him from the depths of our own hearts. 'We can even take up life as Play ('Leela'):

Straying clouds in shower fling
Dew-drops shaken from their wing
And now the sun is shining free
And smiling clouds reflect his glee.

Beneath the roof of golden rays
The little children have their plays.
Their magic touch turns into gold
Every heap of earth they fold.

They build their sparrows' nests with mirth
While those they built fall to the earth :—
Not vain their fall ! Their ruins yield
Fresh earth with which new nests to build.

Oh ! I will yoke Mind's lightning-car
To summer-steeds that glowing are
Like visions fleeting ; make them fleet
To some far quarterless retreat !

With burnished arrows I will fill,—
Arrows of new thought that will
Be glittering star-like in the skies,—
My scabbard, store of new surprise !

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And numberless do cities grow
In every quarter. I'll throw
My shafts in showers without aim,—
A hit or miss, 'tis all the same !

For what they hit or where they go,
Oh ! never can I care to know !
No arrow from its goal can stray ;
Nothing is wasted in a play !

I must now take leave of the reader. For, though nothing is wasted in play, space may as well be spared in the *Triveni* for better or similar purposes. I have liked these poems and their author. Nay, I have undoubtedly loved them. And I am sure that the reader will like them too. I have kept myself sedulously away from these later pages in order to enable him to see things for himself. The only other question which I may be asked, now that I am pilloried, is : 'What about the defects of your poet ? Is he so faultless that you hold your tongue and are silent?' It would be too presumptuous on my part to answer saying, 'Judge for yourself!' Every poet has his pets. And his pets are most likely to be his defects,—for he does not turn them inside out. The unceremonious style of some of his early poems, the infernal love of rhymes which besets them now and then and strangles them with too many sweets, (This is to be taken with caution; for, as Humbert Wolfe says, rhyme is hardly a less glorious invention than that of fire!), the fondness for puns, (A very wicked habit, for once you get into it, you will never get out of it), and the like are all that I can find. And the later poems are free even from these. The only indictment to which some of these have been subjected is their obscurity,—a charge which the undiscerning level against all good poetry.

'Srinivasa' (Masti Venkatesa Iyengar) came out with a fine collection of sonnets some time back: its two most notable features being, in my opinion, an oracular confidence of thought and a miraculous ease of expression. This radiant personality stands out in the sequence as a whole, not so

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much in the individual pieces themselves. He distributed rewards and punishments and confessed his likes and dislikes in the most majestic manner ; and we all felt that it was the most natural thing in the world for him to do. And Bendre also came in for his turn. 'Srinivāsa' praised the rain-bow vesture of his verse ; referred to him as a wizard ; and called him a snake-charmer who would expose the harm of Evil to the people. Bendre could as well have pocketed these compliments and quietly slept over them. But he returned the compliment in a sonnet, saying :

'Mine is an imperfect vision; yours has the perfection suggestive of infinity.'

His imperfect vision may contain many perfections. But the fact that it is imperfect is the crux of the matter. Here is a great promise. Its fulfilment lies in the lap of the gods.



To the Washerman's Donkey

O tragic comrade, dusky grey!
Of whom so few have truly sung,
Believe me, I respect your bray,
Your heaven-cleaving mother-tongue.

I long to know the thoughts you think,
For you can think if mortals can,—
Sad contrast to the gaudy pink
Turban of your grim washerman !

I know your wretchedness, your grief,
And knowing it mine own hath ceased.
But how shall I impart relief
To you, O poor exploited beast ?

When I behold your master's whip
And hear it on your body crack
I seem to feel the warm blood drip
And trickle right across my back.

I seem to have become a part
Of all exploited things like you ;
My heart goes beating to your heart
And every beat rings clear and true.

With you I toil and trudge and keep
Incessant pace, being equal-hired,
But, brother ! soon we both shall sleep
For God knows, we are very tired !

Vikarabad, 30th Sept. '31.

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

The Idyll of Ecard¹

By CHANDRAPAI.

This legend I have heard told so often by the village folk living in the outskirts of Tiruvallur; and yet I have had great difficulty in piecing this together into a continuous, consistent and credible narrative; for, while in all the different accounts I have received there was not any considerable discrepancy as to the ending of the idyll, they were all slipshod and vague as to the events, not to say the details, of the lives of the protagonists, individually and together. So indifferent were those who told me this tale as to all such details, and in such a flustered and impatient manner did they hurry and gloss over them, that it gave me the impression that they looked upon them not merely as irrelevant and insignificant but also as decidedly the kind of things one did not talk about. Consequently the different accounts were rather varied, and the differences they presented to me so very irreconcilable.

I have tried to give the tale a form and a sequence, and to embellish it to the best of my ability with a description of the place, from what it is now, as it must have been in the days when this tale is said to have happened. But I am only too aware of how far it falls short of the power and impressiveness that it had when it was told to a gaping audience with all the intense solemnity and authority of a religious recital.

* * *

On one of the little rocks which seemed to be stranded in the midst of the scraggy, scanty pasturage a cowherd of about seventeen years of age was sitting, statuesque in immobility, with his back to the sun. It was high time for him to call the cattle home. But he did not move. He was crouching on his crook, pressing it to the ground with his left hand and resting his right elbow on it. His right cheek was thrust upward by his right palm and consequently his mouth

¹Pronounced 'Eecard'

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.also was drawn upward to that side. The sun was descending slowly, very slowly, as if gathering momentum for its final plunge down, beyond the distant cluster of cocoanut palms. It was, as it were, grinning with malicious pleasure behind his back ; and every moment its grin was growing broader and broader. Presently, unable to contain its mirth, and afraid of giving offence, it would hide its face behind those distant palms. But he heeded it not. . . .

He was looking with listless eyes at the panorama that spread before him. His eyes strayed homeward to the village of Tiruvallur with its low thatch-roofed houses and the newly built temple which seemed to him to be brooding in the midst of the village like a woebegone shepherd in the midst of his reclining flock ; to the yellow terraces of the local potentate's abode at the other side of the village ; to the highway which, in spite of its huge trees at regular intervals and narrow ditches black with sewage on either side of it, looked more like a beaten track than a road, because two deep and ugly ruts, along which myriads of bullock carts had plied up and down, ran through it. He contemplated the highway leading up from the village through the fields, its sweeping bend leading straight up to some distance from where he was sitting, and its winding, undulating way through Ecard, the rugged and uneven tract of land with its scrappy vegetation and its straggling trees. A far-away look came into his eyes as though he were striving to follow the winding process of the road beyond. . . .

His thoughts were far away—back in the halcyon days in the pleasant pasture-lands high up on the Kaveri. With tantalising vividness his eyes beheld a girl with sheeny black hair flowing down to her hips, with wide and sparkling dark eyes, with lips ever parted in a dazzling smile. She was short and slim. Her complexion was a lustrous dark brown and her features were fine and well cut, though not regular, and in perfect proportion. She was standing with her hands on her hips, her head thrown back and her nose tilted up provokingly. . . .

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'Amaravathi!' He had breathed her name involuntarily, and he was startled by his own voice.

Amaravathi!—Free as the air in her movements; as frolicsome as any of the lambs, and as tender of heart as any of the ewes, which she tended. Amaravathi with whom he had played in childhood in front of their huts, played at tending sheep and at bull-fighting; with whom he had quarrelled too, occasionally. Amaravathi who was always glad to meet him in the meadows when they were tending their sheep; and, when they grew up, the only individual to whom he confided all his failings and pretensions, his hopes and fears. Amaravathi to whom he went for sympathy in affliction; and with whom he was always glad to share his joys. Amaravathi whom he was always glad to help out of any trouble. Amaravathi who sometimes looked up to him as to a father, and sometimes comforted and cheered him as a mother would a child. Amaravathi who . . .

And the tears stood in his eyes. The whole panorama became blurred to his vision, and faded out altogether. Instead, he saw the fresh green meadows by the Kaveri, with here and there a copse, and here and there a wide carpet of flowers, and the cool vistas of golden paddy fields spreading out far and wide on all sides. The smell of fresh verdure, of the flowers and of the sheep, made his nostrils tingle. He heard the bleating of the sheep: and, in between, the almost imperceptibly gentle lapping of the wavelets of the river against the bank and the faint but incisive soughing of the wind in the grove of mango trees on the other side of the river. But above all, a shriller and sweeter cry from the distance drummed against his ears and sent a thrill through his whole being—the piercing, almost primeval, 'Hoy' of his beloved playmate from across the meadows . . .

The lowing of the cows he tended brought him back to sad reality. They were moving about restlessly, wanting to be taken home so that they may feed their young and be milked, and lie down and ruminate and sleep. In the intensity of their yearnings and their despair they stood hushed

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and immobile for a spell. The sun had set a while before, and the stars were peeping out one by one. There was an unearthly silence around him. It was as if Silence were there as a living presence—a presence that could be felt.

He looked intently at a star just above the horizon in the south-east which was twinkling away with all its might . . . It was winking at him. It was! What right had it to gloat over his misery to his face? . . .

Amaravathi was running towards him, like a blackbird skimming over the field, for succour from a chasing bull. How proud he was to support her terrified, clinging form trembling and sweating against his—to brandish his crook heroically above his head. He felt as if he was Krishna himself. He would not give that fleeting moment to be king of all the world. He would gladly die if the bull tore him to pieces then and there. But the bull beat an undignified retreat, though it tried to cover its loss of dignity by walking away slowly and nonchalantly. She looked all her thanks in her sparkling eyes and in her parted lips . . .

He thought, with a wistfulness which swelled into an oppressive and painful contemplation, of the calm, pleasant tenor of their lives in the little secluded village on the Kaveri : of their homes, low huts huddled together like sheep in a spread-out grove of cocoanut palms. He remembered the moonlight nights when he and she had played among the feathery shadows of the palms which seemed to dance on the sands bathed in moonlight ; or had wandered by themselves when the shadows were still, with a faint suggestion of trembling, as if they were the reflection of the trees in some strange liquid surface of pale yellow.

He would lie awake of nights, outside his home, on a mat woven of cocoanut leaves with a low flat stool of wood for pillow, staring at the palms standing motionless in the still night in the mellow light of the moon, or on moonless nights silhouetted darkly against the inky, star-studded sky ; and would wallow in a very vague and hazy reflection in which he would look upon them as souls stranded in the midst of life,

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brooding vacantly over the purpose of their existence. Suddenly there would be a fleeting rustle ; as if they were disturbed in their reverie, they would shake their heads petulantly, but ever so slightly and lazily, and then they would drop into their still brooding again.*

The cocoanut palm, being of all trees nearest to the human in shape by virtue of its distinct shaggy head, has always tempted man to project on to it his own vacant and futile speculations about life ; and as ages and ages ago man pondered over the mystery of life, he does now, and will do till eternity. Even as a child he had been incited, by the strange insistence of the sight of the still and brooding palms, to wonder about the meaning and aim of life. But he had speculated with a child's mind, a mind bright and flitting and gay like a butterfly, with the eager wonder which a child feels when it first sets eyes on a pleasant sight : and not with the sense of emptiness and futility which neurotic elders try feverishly to camouflage to themselves and to others by creating and fondly believing in the most outrageously fantastic myths.

Those palms had played a distinct part in the thoughts of the two of them. They were conversant with all their ways and whims. And when they had left the little village for good and had come to Ecard, they had recollected them as often and as vividly and with as much pleasure as the good people they had left behind.

The soothing rustling of the palms, their intermittent and rhythmic swaying, along with the soft cool breeze they wafted about and their occasional outbursts as of laughter, when of a night the two of them were resting after the labours of the day, was such a contribution to the pleasant and cheerful ruminating and desultory chat they had indulged in by themselves in imitation of their elders. The palms were pleasant companions on moonlight nights, and fearful ominous ghosts on dark nights at which even the dogs would bark incessantly! On stormy nights they would sway and dance in the dark like possessed women, with their hair flowing wild ; and curled up snugly in their beds inside their

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different huts, each would fearfully listen to them moaning and whining like women in travail.

The tears trickled silently down his cheeks as he thought of how all that had suddenly ended. Foraging hordes from the neighbouring enemy' kingdom had swooped down upon them, like a kite swooping down on a blithe and innocent little chicken,—unexpectedly and as if from nowhere. They had had to fly overnight for their lives. And they had come and settled in this Ecard—so bleak and eerie—but at first so grand and wonderful.

It was here they had first become painfully conscious of the cruelty of man to man, of creature to its kind, of one species to another ; of the sinister, secret strife that, in this world, goes hand in hand with the sheer zest in life. And they would sorrow and fear for the world and for themselves. It was Ecard which first intoxicated them, when they were alone of an evening in its midst, with the glorious illusion that only the two of them did exist in all that dark and vast universe. And the next moment it would crush them with the humiliating revelation that they were puny mites of no account in all the immensity of this world and the other worlds which peered at it from beyond through holes in the dark blue sky . . .

He worked as cowherd to all the cow-owners in the village : and she watered the young mango plants in the large grove near the village and collected cotton in the cotton fields in the evenings for her living. They could not meet very often . . .

But how dear were those meetings because so few : how sweet it was to wait for and dream of a meeting before it came about; and how sweet it was to sleep on the memory of it after it was over. His eyes would close, but her face, with parted lips and dancing eyes, would stand before him, and her sweet voice would keep singing in his heart . . .

Wave after wave of tender recollection of those glorious days when first they came to Ecard surged through his brain. They would sometimes meet after sunset, when their labours

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were over, and walk side by side along the lonely highway or stray into the groves or the fields or to the ponds in an eager search for the wonders and vagaries of Ecard.

He remembered vividly their first walk together along the very road he had been listlessly looking at sometime before. Ah! he could remember . . . It was a beautiful moonlit night. Even the dusty uneven road with the two ugly gashes running along its length was beautiful to behold and pleasant to walk along. For a stretch, the road ran through a little wood,—trees of various kinds growing wild together, wood-apple, margosa and guava, and on the sides of the road itself, the stately king trees with an occasional banyan or 'asoka.' The moonlight breaking through the foliage was so bright and the shadows so intensely dark and clearly outlined that the road looked like a clumsily spread 'carpet of curious, varied and weird designs in silver on a dark ground. The moon itself could only be seen through chance openings among the leaves and branches. But the play of moonlight among the gently swaying branches and the rustling leaves was most wonderful and pleasant to watch. From all around came the smell of fresh blossoms, of strange flowers they had not known before. And the ponds which were visible in chinks and patches gleamed like sparkling diamonds and shining sheets of gold. Their surroundings, in their entirety and in every detail, were so fantastically beautiful, that they just could not accept the fact that they were in this world, that they were walking along an ugly old track in the midst of a dreary and bizarre expanse. The illusion that they were wandering in another world, a strangely beautiful world, was so very incisive and enticing in its sweetness. And to heighten the illusion, to their infinite joy, when they came up to where the road ran through open country, the whole scraggy rugged tract of land, with its straggling trees and its few marshy ponds scattered far and near, was so transformed by the shadows and highlights cast by the moon that it seemed to have been metamorphosed by some magic spell into a cool and entrancingly beautiful landscape.

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They had walked on in a trance, enraptured by an emotion which was an inextricable tangle of their emotional response to the beauty, mystery and grandeur of their surroundings and of their pleasure in relishing it together. And suddenly they had been startled by the consciousness of something queer. They had looked up impulsively to the left of the road to see the moon, and, not finding it there, they had looked about with a start and had found it shining at them from the right. (He seemed to be actually standing there on that moonlit road with Amaravathi beside him, looking wonderingly at the moon). At first they could not believe their eyes. They decided they had been dreaming, and had absent-mindedly thought it was to the left while it was actually to the right. Or was the moon playing hide-and-seek with them, and laughing at their perplexity? It looked like it! The moon was beaming at them with a mischievously broad grin. They had suddenly looked back of one accord, as if the clue lay with somebody behind their backs who was in the confidence of the moon, and to whom the moon seemed to have given a sly and knowing wink. And they had found that the road they had come along had made a grand sweeping bend, and that the moon seeming to have jumped of a sudden to their right was no mystery at all. This discovery gave them a delicious thrill. . . . They had always cherished the memory of that incident. And ever after, when they looked at the moon their hearts would fill with gladness. They would remember that incident, and look upon the moon as a playfellow, almost expecting it the next moment to efface itself and to laugh mockingly at them, appearing behind their backs. . . .

A bat, vividly dark even in the enveloping darkness, flew past him so near his head and so silently, that it startled him out of his reverie. To his feverish imagination it seemed a stray spirit from the nether world, a harbinger of death. . . .

She had been with him then; and every new experience brought him gladness and joy and nothing else. . . .

And the snakes! Ah, the snakes! They had often been

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warned solemnly by the inhabitants of the place to be wary of snakes,—to talk loudly and walk noisily in the dark so that the snakes may be warned of their approach and take themselves off. They would remind themselves of these well-meant injunctions, only to forget them the next instant in their pleasant preoccupations. How glad he was when a snake crossed their path,—and snakes were plentiful. Her startled shriek was music in his ears ; her frightened clutching of his arm, an experience the relish of which would not die for days. But even more dear was Amaravathi's shame-faced laughing at her involuntary jumping up and screaming. And she would try to justify her action, smiling all the while, on the score that she'd only been startled, and was not at all afraid. 'Of course. You'd only been startled,' he would say laughing. . . . He was startled to find himself speaking the same words out aloud. . . .

A sudden, long-drawn-out wail pierced the stillness. It went deep into his heart and seemed to become a solid lump inside. It turned into the gasping, half-strangled groan of someone being strangled to death. Then it changed to the hideous, heartless laugh of the murderer at his victim's last hoarse and frantic cry for help. It was a hyena. . . .

It put him in mind that the whole of Ecard was swarming with the spirits of people who had died premature deaths ; people who had been murdered in these lonesome parts ; people who had been drowned or had drowned themselves in the marshy ponds : people who had died of epidemics (or, according to the villagers, people who had perished under the wrath of the goddess of small-pox or of cholera). . . .

He remembered the day both of them had walked along the road branching out near an old margosa tree, and leading to the cremation ground and to another village beyond. They had walked along the dark deserted track, and had been struck with wonder when, turning a sharp bend, they saw before them, instead of a huge banyan tree which they had often seen from afar in daylight, a spreading firmament of brilliant twinkling stars. It was so marvellous and beautiful to look

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at, that they had stood transfixed to the spot, gazing with glad, wondering eyes at the sight. Then they had drawn near and had found that it was only an enormous swarm of fireflies disporting themselves amidst the foliage of the banyan tree. And, absolutely oblivious of the lateness of the hour and the curious rustlings and swishings which they had heard intermittently, they had gazed up spell-bound at the glorious sight, their hearts swelling with pleasure. And all the way back home they had turned round from time to time to look at the tree scintillating with myriads and myriads of tiny, twinkling lights, indulging the while in the self-satisfying thought that they alone among human beings had been privileged to enjoy that most bewitchingly beautiful and gladdening of sights.

The next day, they were told in the village that the big banyan tree was always at night swarming over with myriads of fireflies ; and also (in hushed and awe-inspiring voices) that it was a terribly ghost-haunted place. There were, they said, almost as many ghosts haunting that tree as there were fireflies. And Amaravathi had shuddered. And when they remembered the curious rustlings and swishings, she had shuddered the more. And she would never again be persuaded to go to that place in the evenings. He had tried every manner of persuasion. He had told her it was all nonsense. That there were no such things as ghosts. That he was not afraid of them at all, if they did exist. And what had she to fear when he was by her side, to protect her from the slightest harm ? But she would just shudder and shudder at the thought of the ghosts and refuse flatly. After a time he had persuaded her to go over to see, at least from a distance, the little firmament of sparkling fireflies. She had yielded solely for the pleasure of seeing the beautiful sight, though she would stand there trembling by his side, and would drag him away soon

Amaravathi believed in ghosts and spirits and such things. He could not. It was all silly. Though everybody else believed in them too. It *was* absurd. How could there be spirits

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A pack of jackals began to howl in the distance. The howling approached nearer and nearer, and swelled up in volume. A shudder ran through his frame. He had heard them howling at greater proximity before, and he was not afraid of jackals at all. But now it made his blood run cold. He did not believe in spirits at all; but a fancy struck him that they were spirits from the nether world, and were coming with war-cry and wail to fetch him. The fancy possessed him and became a menacing reality to his severed imagination. They were coming, coming,—those spirits. At one time their cry was a sad mournful wail, and at another a blood-thirsty, fierce and triumphant war-cry. He perspired all over and shook with spasms of shivering. But the cry receded farther and farther and died in the distance, suddenly landing him with its cessation in the rainy season in Ecard when Amaravathi was with him.

Ah! those were memorable days. . . .

The sun's rays, as if they were white hot swords, would sear the land from east to west. Day after day, day after day, they would sear the land. Till the land wilted and groaned, gasped for breath, and finally gave up its ghost in despair. The ponds would dry up, exposing their beds, which would seem much like the human skin corroded and broken up by virulent skin-disease, to dry and fester under the scorching sun. Most of the shrubs and plants and a few of the trees would become like dried up specimens of themselves. The ripening corn would droop and lay itself down to dry up and forget that ever the sap had coursed through its veins. And all live conscious beings would think and dream of nothing but rain, rain, rain. They would find themselves forced to face the terrible possibility that the monsoon had forgotten its yearly duty by them. Men and women would begin to joke and to fear that the monsoon had either forgotten its duty, or had mysteriously passed by them, or was no more. And at last! At last the monsoon would come upon them accompanied by thunder and lightning. Lightning in blinding flashes; and thunder which gave them the awesome impres-

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sion of huge rocks rolling down rugged slopes or clashing down precipices amongst the mountainous clouds right over their heads. And the rains would pour down in torrents, and the winds. . . .

The dry ponds would fill over and break their banks and overflow; every shallow would become a puddle and every ditch a gurgling muddy stream. How many times they had stepped into the mire which spread far around every pond and had extricated themselves with difficulty, the filthy mud clinging slimily half-way up to their knees. How many times, walking dreamily about, they had inadvertently walked into a puddle.

Then there was the eternal croaking of the frogs. All the frogs in all the ponds would join in conclave and croak and croak and croak,—croaking their throats out as if they were sending up a plaint to heaven pleading for rain and more rain.

He woke up from the trance with startling suddenness, and was still more startled to hear the deep croak of one of those old bull frogs. It was the deep, long-drawn-out 'moo-a-a' of one of his cows from afar crying for its calf.

An owl screeched from somewhere. But in his dazed mind he could not decide whether it was the screeching of an owl or the screeching of Amaravathi, for it appeared so much like her startled screech when, as they were playing on the banks of the Kaveri, she stepped on some harmless crawler.

But how soon it had all ended! She had run up to the next village one evening on an errand for her mother. She was to have returned at dusk. It was long since dusk had set in, and her mother's anxiety had turned to a consternation which gripped her heart. And, trembling with fearful foreboding, the poor mother had walked up to the next village, and there she had been told that her daughter had left a good while ago. The mother had walked back home, her heart limp and heavy in her, despairingly crying Amaravathi's name every now and then. She had hurried home buoyed

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up by the fond hope which swelled up in her, that Amaravathi might have returned home when she had been away. But Amaravathi was not at home. And all the villagers had set out in the darkness to search for her. They had searched and searched ; but she was nowhere to be found. He had been among the van of the searching party, and he had run about madly here and there. How he had run about ! He had been like a wounded animal running it knows not whither. He could not think. He was speechless and wild eyed. He did not then or after know what exactly his feelings were at that time. But now he lived the whole experience over again in all its intensity. The same incomprehensible, frantic dazedness came over him. He just could not think anything. He could not comprehend it at all. His Amaravathi, his beloved companion ! Where could she be ? Where !'

They had never found her. Ecard—gloomy, weird and mysterious—had gobbled her up and looked as glum and bleak as ever.

His parents had noticed his distraction, and on the insistent advice of the other folk who had also noticed it, had considerably sent him away to the far south to serve under a flourishing cattle broker.

Now, after a year, he had returned : and his family was prosperous. Wherein lay the prosperity ? *She* was no more. How bleak and gloomy looked Ecard ! What malice was on its face ! Why, it looked like the face of the Devil itself. It was a habitation of malignant spirits ; not a fit dwelling place for man. Why, why had they come to this Ecard ?

A faint sigh rose up from afar and drew near, a long-drawn-out sigh of pent-up agony that swelled in emotion as it drew nearer and nearer. It was the wind stirring among the distant palms. A vague chillness clutched at his heart.

There was a spell of stillness. And the sigh rose up again, greater and more intense than before. And approached gathering in force. It sounded like a faint moan, turned to a soft wail.

They are coming, he thought, the spirits,—in battalions,

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in hordes of thousands and tens of thousands. The wail rose and fell; and ended in a deafening, prolonged shriek. Discordant noises rent the air,—thundering and booming noises; cries of rage and fury and of excruciating pain; dying groans, cries for mercy, shrieks of women, wail of children,—all sorts of noises impinged on his ears from all around him. The trees knocked against each other like giants lashing each other with their gigantic arms. Their cries of pain and of triumph and their heartrending roars when giving up their ghosts filled the air. As in a thick and furious battle, the demons were fighting in the darkness, each against the others around, without distinguishing friend from foe. The battle was devilish in fury.

Clearly, above all this pandemonium, he heard a distinct cry, ‘Come to me! Come to me!’

‘What’s this I hear? Who’s calling? Amaravathi! My Amaravathi! Is that you?’

‘Yes. It is your Amaravathi, your own Amaravathi.’

‘Amaravathi!’

She was in his arms and sobbing as if her heart would break.

‘Don’t cry, Amaravathi. It’s all right. We shall never part again. Don’t cry. I can’t bear to see you cry. We shall never part! Shall we?’

And she cheered up and smiled. That old open smile of hers,—in which the lips would part, showing the pearly white teeth and would never meet again—and her eyes shone bright even in the darkness. She took his hand in hers, pressed it and said softly, ‘Come with me!’

And the next moment he was walking with his hand in hers, never stopping, nor stumbling, nor tripping. The darkness, as if it were a living personality, hovered about them and oppressed them on every side. But he did not at all mind the darkness, for Amaravathi was with him. The wind blew their clothes furiously about. The trees and shrubs extended hungry ravenous arms in the dark to clutch him, moaning and raving all the while. His feet were caught by

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the spirits fallen in the fray, spirits which crept like snakes and twined round his legs and pulled him. His feet bled. But what did he care! His clothes were caught and torn by those devilish arms in the dark, and his skin was scratched by sharp claws. But he did not heed anything. Amaravathi's hand was in his. He was not afraid of the furious demons. He was with Amaravathi. That was what he wanted. *Nothing else mattered.*

He was going . . . Going he knew not whither. . . . But what did he care so long as Amaravathi was with him! He smelt the filthy stench of the mire around the ponds, but the fragrance of the fresh flowers in Amaravathi's hair was more insistent. His feet brushed against the sharp edged weeds . . . But what did he care! Amaravathi's hands were soft and cool. . . .

The wind stopped with mysterious suddenness. A faint lurid glow was in the sky. He was bewildered by the consciousness of being on the slushy bank of a pond with Amaravathi by his side. Sweet, dear old Amaravathi, she was with him again. She pressed close to him and put her arm round his waist. He put his arm around her and held her as if he would never let her go.

'Come,' she said softly, and gently pulled him forward. . . . They both fell into the water. . . . Water all around. . . . They were going down, down. Water all above. . . . They were still going down, down. He did not shriek or struggle. Amaravathi was with him. That was all he cared for. His feet struck the bed of the pond, and was caught in a tangled root or something. What if? . . . He was lying flat on the bed. . . . Amaravathi had placed his head on her lap. 'Amaravathi, my own Amaravathi. . . . I feel so sleepy, so sleepy. . . . let me sleep on your lap for a while. . . . if only I could sleep on your lap for ever.'

'Sleep, my beloved, sleep. You shall sleep in my lap for ever. And I shall sing you to sleep.'



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The ending of this tale may well strike one as a poignant account of the malignant power of the spirit of those who have died before their time, and have thus been thwarted in the middle of their self-fulfilment, to kill their beloved who has been left alone by Fate to live and to enjoy life. But this, I must assert, was not the purpose, the profound significance, put into it by those who told me this tale. They did not intend it to be a morbid tale, to overwhelm one with a sense of fear and gloom. They ended the tale on an unmistakable note of elation, not the fatalistic elation of acceptance, but the bright and glorious elation of an unshakable belief in the immortality of the soul and the eternal inseparability of those mated by God.

In Defence of Mr. J. B. Priestley

By C. L. R. SASTRI, B.Sc.

'He nothing common did nor mean
Upon this memorable scene.' —*Andrew Marvell.*

(1)

Of course, I may, in a manner of speaking, be only begging the question. Mr. Priestley, for aught I know, may really be in no need of any defence: least of all from such a puny mortal as myself. I may, in fact, be even guilty of presumption in attempting to come to his rescue—real or imaginary. Mr. Priestley, indeed, is (if the comparison be allowed) like Falstaff: he stands four-square to all the winds that blow. And that, be it understood, not only in the matter of bulk: though, to do him but bare justice, it must be conceded that he has a generous share of it. Like it, or not, he has *embonpoint*: and, what is more, it is even possible that he may, any one of these days, be in the enviable position of running a neck-to-neck race with Mr. Chesterton as far as that is concerned. Mr. Chesterton, we know, is not ashamed of his proportions: on the contrary, he preens himself upon them. Has he not (to take only one example) himself taken the public into his confidence and told it, or them, how once, in a tram, he vacated his seat in favour of three ladies—thus revealing, to an astonished world, his innate, and exquisite, chivalry? Well, I can only hope that Mr. Priestley takes equally kindly to his girth. Coleridge, if I am not mistaken, has, among others, the following two beautiful lines in his *Ancient Mariner*:

Long and lean and lank
As is the soft, ribbed sea-sand.

In these days of 'long and lean and lank' men and women—men and women who, in Falstaff's immortal phrase,

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look like ‘cheeseparings made after supper,’—I do not think it right to ridicule, to pour scorn upon, portly people. On the other hand, we ought to wish them well, to wish more room to their elbows. All honour to them, I say! Let them, like the seed that fell upon good ground, multiply themselves a thousand-fold!

(2)

Mr. Priestley, let me point out, resembles Falstaff in another matter also. He has, like his predecessor, abundance of humour. Of course, nobody can equal Falstaff in that line. At any rate, nobody has equalled him up to now. All that I can lay down at the moment, with as much authority as possible, is that he (Mr. Priestley) has qualified himself in it as much as, if not more than, the next man: which, for the present, is, I fancy, good enough praise. No wonder that it has fallen to him to write perhaps the best book extant on English humour.

(3)

Talking about writing the ‘best book’ upon this and that, it is, surely, no mere coincidence, I think, that Mr. Priestley should have written the ‘best book’ upon the English novel (the best *short* book, I mean), the ‘best book,’ after Hazlitt (whom, indeed, he resembles in some ways), upon the English comic characters, the ‘best book’ upon Thomas Love Peacock, the ‘best novel’ as well as the ‘best best-seller’ (if I may say so) of modern times (*Angel Pavement* and *The Good Companions*), some of the ‘best’ essays—critical and other—and three of the ‘best’ modern plays (*Dangerous Corner* and *Laburnum Grove* and *Eden End*): not to speak of the ‘best book’ upon English humour, of which mention has already been made, and the ‘best’ book upon England. The two greatest living essayists are himself and Mr. Robert Lynd (‘Y.Y.’ of the *New Statesman*): though it is true—regrettably true—that, after his (deservedly) dazzling success in the novel form, he has (let us hope, only temporarily) abandoned essay-writing. All the same, a few

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books of essays stand to his credit: of which by far the brightest is *Open House*: a book that called forth the most glorious eulogy from a writer of the distinction of Mr. H. M. Tomlinson: a writer, too, who never, if he can help it, praises any modern author. Why, some eminent persons have compared Mr. Priestley (as an essayist) to Hazlitt. Of course, one does not, in these days, write such long essays as the latter: there is simply not the time for them, even if there is the inclination, and, anyway, no journal would care to publish them: so that Mr. Priestley—or any other essayist, for that matter—is not in a position to display all, or even most, of his learning, wisdom, and mental gymnastics as the hermit of Winterslow was able to do. Moreover, it requires (does it not?) another Hazlitt to beat our well-known William: which, it only stands to reason, one dare not expect in these 'thin and ghastly times of ours.' Barring that, however, we can say with certainty that Mr. Priestley has come as near to Hazlitt as anybody has done: having the same range of subject, the same loftiness of thought, and the same polish of expression as his predecessor. Well, what more need be said concerning that?

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From 1924 or 1925 to 1929 Mr. Priestley had been contributing essays regularly every week to the *Saturday Review*: then under the incomparable *regime* of Mr. Gerald Barry. Well, to digress for a moment, the *Saturday* of those days was simply coruscating with brilliant writing: with such stuff as 'dreams are made on.' Every issue of that celebrated weekly was a regular literary feast: a battle of wits, almost. Wordsworth has written of the French Revolution:

France standing on the top of golden hours.
And human nature seeming born again.

With some (pardonable) exaggeration, one can say the same thing of that period when the *Saturday* was the uncrowned king of English Weeklies. English literature looked

as if it were being re-born : anyway, to be young at that time was (to quote the Lake Poet again) 'very heaven.' Almost all the writers in that journal were distinguished persons : 'Stet'—Welby, and Ivor Brown, and Gerald Gould, and Edward Shanks, and L. F. Hartley, and a host of others : but none more so than Mr. Priestley himself, who was, indeed, the noblest Roman of them all, who, 'flamed in the forehead of the morning sky.' Well, it is a pity that those days are gone : and more so that Mr. Priestley has taken to 'fresh woods and pastures new.'

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Mr. Priestley, the while he was entertaining us with his essays—each a gem in itself—was also writing criticism—literary criticism—of the best type. Indeed, he first became famous, not through his essays, which only served to enhance his already-won distinction, but through his book, *English Comic Characters* (John Lane), which produced a veritable ripple on the otherwise serene surface of the lake of English letters. He was then a very young man : in his early twenties, in fact. He is a young man, even now : being still on the right side of forty. Among his critical writings his earliest book is still his best. It contains, in my opinion, not only his best criticism, but also his best writing. This was followed by his collection of critical essays, called *Figures in Modern Literature* (also published by Lane), which won the applause of the late Sir Edmund Gosse and Mr. Arthur Waugh and others of the same calibre. Then came, in swift succession, his *George Meredith* and *Thomas Love Peacock* in the (new) *English Men of Letters* series, edited by Mr. (now) Sir J. C. Squire. About the former I shall not write much : disagreeing as I do with much of what he says of Meredith. I am, let me confess, not only a Priestley—but a Meredith—fan as well ; and when these two *literati* clash I have no hesitation in plumping for the older gentleman. In that book Mr. Priestley, it will be remembered, propounded the curious thesis that *Meredith* was a great writer, but not a

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great man. I am perfectly aware that the author of the *Egoist* is in disfavour now, Thomas Hardy—and even some lesser lights—being exalted much above him. It has become quite a fashion for any and everybody to confess blatantly that he cannot understand Meredith. I fail to see that it is a matter for self-congratulation: on the contrary, the misfortune, in my opinion, is theirs, not Meredith's. Meredith, no doubt, wrote freakishly in his later novels; and I am prepared to grant that the early part of *One of Our Conquerors* is a sheer insult to the English language. All this—and even more—may be admitted. But, surely, there remains—after every possible deduction has been made—something of Meredith that is unsurpassed in the literature of his country. Meredith is incomparably greater than Hardy, both as a man and as a writer. However, I shall not pursue the point further: except to deplore that such a discerning critic as Mr. Priestley should not have pressed his foot down on such literary flap-doodle. All the same, Mr. Priestley's criticism in this book is as profound as in his other books: the late Lord Oxford called it 'penetrating,' and regarded it as the most intelligent estimate of Meredith that he had ever come across. Anyhow, his *Peacock* deserved the full-throated praise of Sir Edmund Gosse as the best book (so far) about that curious writer: Mr. Priestley, strangely enough, preferring the father-in-law to the son-in-law.

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I should like my readers to understand that Mr. Priestley was famous even before he 'launched on the Brahmaputra'—as he wittily said in another connection—of novel-writing: famous as a critic, and famous, also, as an essayist. Let this be remembered by those of his detractors who, now that Mr. Priestley is a 'best-selling' novelist, conveniently forget that fact and label him a 'low-brow' and, perhaps, the lowest brow that is alive. I know that Messrs. Desmond MacCarthy and R. Ellis Roberts and Hugh Ross Williamson (Editor of the *Bookman*—a magazine that is now incorporated

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with the *London Mercury*—and worshipper at the shrine of Mr. T. S. Eliot) are the deadliest detractors of Mr. Priestley. Mr. MacCarthy's opinion is, certainly, valuable. But it is a fact that that gentleman has fallen upon evil days, allowing his critical perception to descend so low as to hail Mr. David Garnett as the master-novelist of the present day, and to applaud his every successive book as the finest that he has seen for a whole generation, and so forth. When I have said this I have, I think, said all that need be said about Mr. MacCarthy's present level of literary appreciation.

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I have no space to write about Mr. Priestley's *The Good Companions* and *Angel Pavement* and *Faraway and Wonder Hero*, nor of his earlier novels, *Adam in Moonshine* and *Benighted* and *The Town Major of Miraucourt*. They speak for themselves. If, as the poet says, painting the lily and gilding refined gold and adding perfume to the violet are matters of supererogation, then I cannot help thinking that singing the praises of these books is equally so. The construction, as well as the style, of *Angel Pavement* have touched the high-water mark of English novel-writing; and, as for his characters, Mr. Jess Oakroyd is perhaps the only figure in recent English fiction who will live for ever—taking his place among such immortals as Falstaff, and my Uncle Toby, and Mr. Micawber, and the two Wellers. This is the opinion of Mr. Robert Lynd also, which he set forth succinctly in a recent issue of *John O'London's Weekly*.

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Mr. Priestley needs no defence. But they have told it in Gath that he is a nobody in English letters. Well, it is a critical dictum to make the angels weep. 'Where O'Flaherty sits is the head of the table,' and where Mr. Priestley is in modern English literature.

The Re-creation of Indian Dance

By A. VENKATASWAMY, M.A.

(*The Andhra University, Waltair*)

It is a well-known fact that artistic India was in self-forgetful slumbers for a long time, till the magic touch of the Poet brought it back to life again. The service done by the Poet in this cause will earn the gratitude of generations.

To grasp the secret of the dance as portrayed by the Poet, we must clearly realise the spirit of Indian civilisation. Life is seen as a subtle rhythm, a mystic offering of love to the Divine. The significance of life to the ancient Indian lies in its partaking of the Divine. The half poetic and half philosophic musings of the Upanishadic *Rishis* point to this. It was this spirit that set afame the imagination of the Ajanta artists. One who sees the frescoes cannot fail to understand the mystic lines of the figures as the last points of corporeality, the soft mellow hues and the subjection of groups to rhythm. The drawings were not copies from life, but an idealistic interpretation of it. The dance inaugurated by the Poet can be fully understood only by bearing all these facts in mind.

Coming to the dance itself, as portrayed by the Poet's pupils in *Shap Mochan*, it is nothing but a brilliant interpretation of all the ancient ideals mentioned above. We feel as if the Ajanta figures have come to life again in this drab age. The skill exhibited by the young girls and boys trained by the Poet is remarkable for their age. The dancers move about like lilies swayed by a gentle wind, or like the blue smoke of the altar incense rising in adoration. The rhythm of the hands and the feet captures 'un-heard melodies.' The movement of the fingers is exquisitely delicate. There is not the faintest idea of the spectacular, stormy, or cataclysmic. A forgotten world is re-created softly, almost imperceptibly. It is the *gopis* dancing, in unison with their Lord, the dance

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of love,—not a representation of the world of clash, conflict, and turmoil. The spirit of the dance is entirely Indian, the like of which might not be seen elsewhere. Witnessing it we become mystics, dreamers, in a remote realm of light and love.

The costuming and make-up of the dancers has also been done magnificently and carefully to the last detail, in harmony with the spirit of the dance. They emphasise the postures and movements of the dancers. Though gold and silver have been freely used, the dresses do not appear gaudy. They are thoroughly ancient. As examples may be mentioned the ornament attached to the plaid of hair, and the bracelets on the arms, used by women-folk in villages even today. By all such careful details, time is miraculously switched back by hundreds of years.

It is very desirable that our cultured and educated young men and women (not in the sense of knowing a few bits of English and having meaningless degrees) take to the re-creation of Indian Dance. Our social life will be immensely enriched. Such efforts promise immense possibilities. They are of no less importance than our political and economic strivings.

Who Won in the Assembly?

By N. S. VARADACHARI, M.A., B.L.

Who won in the Assembly? Is it the Government which prides on its one achievement or rather lack of achievement,—its pusillanimous exercise of veto powers which no doubt nullified for the time being the wishes of the people,—or is it the Congress Party which, on account of its magnificent solidarity and unimpaired discipline, could score such victories as did actually isolate Government from even its European and nominated supporters? The people of India stand vindicated in the eyes of the world by the straight conduct of their representatives, and the Government which is miscalled that 'of India' is shown up as a tiny bauble in the hands of the wirepullers of Whitehall, to whose solemn dictates the civilian autocrats here render obeisance and homage. Haughty officials like Sir James Grigg may assert that the Congress has done nothing, and can do nothing till it throws off its recalcitrance and wears the badge of recantation, but he who runs may read that, despite certification and repeated exercise of extraordinary powers, the Government has collapsed in its sinister attempt to isolate the Congress and thus crush it. In fact, if anything, repression has only added strength to the Congress. The Congress does not suffer thereby: its prestige is actually enhanced with every fresh exercise of Government's extraordinary powers. The claim that India has settled down to peace and order is disproved by every act of certification, which, in other words, is really a recognition of the fact that India is still far from the normal, or is on the war-path. Every safeguard which disfigures the India Bill is an eloquent testimony to the lack of moral fibre in British rule over our country. That coercion is the only ultimate safeguard is the bitterest conclusion to which Government has been driven, and this is nothing but a confession of abject defeat.

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But what of the positive side of Congress achievement? The first success of the Congress, and the fullest success, was among the electors who repudiated repression and refused to be parties to it. The armoury of repression, however, is still full and the Government, not content with the retention of obsolete laws like the regulations of 1818 and 1819, are contemplating to replenish the statute book by flooding it with permanent amendments to the Criminal Law which will put the most arbitrary powers into the hands of the bureaucracy. As to what the Assembly would do with such a law, one hardly need doubt. It will consign it back to the Government which sponsors such measures. No weak betrayal, we may be sure, will any longer allow the Government to wear the mask of popular acquiescence. The electors' wishes will be fully carried out, for the pledge of a Congressman is as good in deed as in word.

This apart, the Congress has served to press the popular claim that the country is overtaxed and must be relieved of iniquitous tax burdens. The salt-tax must go and the Postal and Railway rates must be reduced to bearable levels; that was the claim of the Congress in the Assembly and it had the support of all the elected representatives in that House. The military burden, demanded our representatives, must be reduced very considerably both by retrenchment and Indianisation, while in the matter of military policy, the Congress desires to substitute real peace at the frontiers for the present bluff and bluster which arises out of a contempt of the tribesmen. To a subject country like ours groaning under tax-burdens, the most positive contribution which an Assembly can make will be a reduction in those burdens. If the Congress achieves this and nothing else, it will be entitled to the lasting gratitude of our people. Every rupee of tax taken off enables the peasant to lift his head and find a little comfort in additional doles of food. His aching back finds relief as the burden falls off, and it is only then that he will look upon education or public health as subjects in which to interest himself. It is this backing of the peasant that gives the

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Congress its real strength. No more selfless service can be rendered to the people of India than to fight for the reduction of heavy taxation and replace a costly system of administration which spends a fourth of its own gross revenues in salaries and allowances, a percentage which no country meaning business can countenance. The Congress Party in the Assembly fought for such reduction and has justly earned the confidence of the nation.

Next to this in importance is the inauguration of a new work code which will find employment for the millions and at the same time keep out foreign exploitation. Thereby the Government undertakes huge publicity works on its own responsibility and keeps the wage level at a reasonable figure, making it impossible for industrialists to effect unjust cuts in an already dwindling wage. This the Congress Party pressed for through its members on the floor of the Assembly, and though the Government merely ridiculed the plan of raising large loans for any such scheme, it cannot resist popular pressure for long. Work for the languishing masses has been our slogan, and legislators of other parties lacking imagination and frightened at the idea of new commitments for the nation must be told that this will be the main plank in the coming years. Not one crore for village work and rural uplift, but several crores which will rebuild all our villages, rescue them from filth and change the face of their living, is the present plan: not an ideal at which we aim, but the live issue of our present fight with Government. There may be no peace in India till the face of the countryside is changed and the dry bones of the peasant find fresh blood flowing in them, and he finds additional food, a decent dwelling place, healthy surroundings, and an industrious family. The Congress Party based its programme on the service of the peasant which is not, as in the case of other parties copying the Congress programme and calling it by different names, a mere shibboleth or an election stunt, but a creed every word of which has been made good by the self-sacrifice of its workers.

The Congress Party has stood for freedom of speech and

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association for all, including the Communists. Having been assailed by repression by Government in previous years, it could not have done otherwise. Its very presence is a solid bulwark of defence against new fetters being forged, though the Government has already wide powers and may not pay heed to its clamour for the repeal of existing laws.

The Congress has defeated Government eighteen times. But Government still clings to power, unyielding to the popular will. The Congress represents today the hope of a free India and it certainly forebodes ill for any Government which attempts to suppress what may be termed a righteous revolt. Who wins? Is it Authority parading in the robes of repression, or is it the oppressed who, in spite of repeated lashes, gather renewed strength and adorn the fray? Let the people of India and the Congress answer. The voice of freedom says unmistakably: 'Join the Congress, for it is the power that wins.'

The Moon is Dead!

Stop for a moment and let me hear
The wail of the night-wind across the desolate town,
And shivers of the trees on the lawn.
A pigeon plaintively croons from her cote in the tower;
Or is it the night mourning the dead moon?

Yes, the moon is dead!
The sky has drawn a shroud across her face--
A dark cloud-fabric--
The huddled town-shape stands bleak in sorrow;
The night-wind wails:

Touch me not now,
There's a wound in my heart no caress can heal;
No, do not speak; only hear.
The shriek that rises from the depths of despair
No kiss can smother.

How can I tell you what I and the earth know?
That flesh our flesh—the moon is dead!

PREMENDRA MITRA

I let you go by

Ah ! Could I kiss you now, and lose myself
In the flood of your dark singing mystery—
Primeval, death-deep tide !

Could I kiss you on the mouth, and my thrilled soul
Peer into the immensity of your immeasurable being !
Could I, in the sea-soft touch of your lips, find
The meaning of things—beyond, beyond the senses !

But I cannot reach you ; for the sap of life
That would have sipped the ecstasy of the sun,
Is trapped in the seed.

I have waited too long and toyed with empty words ;
They have starved my soul, and now like dead crusts
They lie round me, choking the apertures of life ;
I try to reach you through swathes of age-old drivel.

Vainly, idly I talk to you—you, who will not hear :
—The water-soaked faggot meets the flint in vain :
I let you go by.

PREMENDRA MITRA

Reviews

[*We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French, and German. Books for review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.*]

ENGLISH

The University of Nalanda.—By H. D. Sankalia, M.A., L.L.B. With a preface by the Rev. H. Heras, S. J., St. Xavier's College, Bombay. (Published by B. G. Paul & Co., 12, Francis Joseph St., Madras, 1934. Pages 245, pls. 17 & maps 4. Price Rs. 5.)

The book under review deals with a subject of absorbing interest,—the evolution of a system of education that was available at Nalanda, the famous monastery in Bihar which was the centre of the Mahayanist world in the centuries preceding the downfall of Buddhism in India proper. This system of education, though simple, compared very well with similar systems that characterised Occidental institutions known as 'city schools,' 'studium generale' and 'university.' The seat of such a simple system was the *asrama*, the *matha* and *vihara*; and Nalanda was one such *vihara* that stood first 'as a place which imparts knowledge in all the arts and sciences, and secondly, for a place which holds out invitation to students of every kind from all over the world.'

Tradition associated the name of Nalanda with an episode in the life of the Buddha and with some of his disciples. Probably a monastery, to which the author is inclined to assign the lofty position of 'an international university,' existed there from a very early date—how early we are not in a position to determine,—but it was only in the days of the Chinese pilgrims, Hiuen Tsiang and I-Tsing that it appears to have become the centre of Buddhism, a veritable 'mine of learning' to which scholars from the entire Buddhist world flocked, a position which it enjoyed till the twelfth century A.D. We hear of pilgrim-students from China, Tibet and Korea, of Magadhan princes and princes from the country around Gazni, sons of nobles from Kanchipuram, Purushapura

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(Peshawar) and Samatata wending their way to Nalanda in search of knowledge. It was again at Nalanda that the famous Harsha and Balaputradeva, the king of Java and Sumatra, built *viharas* for students to prosecute their studies. Hiuen Tsiang records that the total number of monks, either belonging to the monastery or strangers residing therein, always reached 10,000 and that 'within the temple they arrange every day about 100 pulpits, and the students attend these courses without any fail, even for a minute.' The outside courts that afforded shelter to the students were of four storeys and included the priests' chambers. Luckily the remains of those buildings have lately been excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India and the site is now called Bargaon or Bargav after a little village of that name not far from Rajagriha, the ancient capital of Magadha. According to Mr. Page 'its characteristic features are a long range of monasteries on the east side, a similar range of *stupas* on the west, and a short range of monasteries to bound the area on the south. Down the centre of the site runs an approach avenue, entered, it would seem, from the north.' The site shows several levels, a succession of structures erected one over the other, but to none of the levels are archaeologists inclined to ascribe a date prior to the 6th century A.D.

After Hiuen Tsiang had left Nalanda, having learnt the *Yogasastra* and carrying an excellent impression of the university which, according to the author, is 'one that would make any institution proud,' there came about 57 pilgrims from China, Japan and Korea, most of whom went to Nalanda for study. Some came by sea and others by land. These preceded I-Tsing who speaks about them. I-Tsing came by sea or by what is called the 'southern route' and stayed at Nalanda for ten years. Though nothing is said about his studies there, we are indebted to him for recording minutely the customs and manners of the priests and the life of the students. And it is these observations that enable us to follow the author's arguments for choosing to call Nalanda 'an international university,' which position it appears to have enjoyed even in the 9th century. The work of the University was not confined to the teaching of students who were within its precincts. Scholars were sent on deputation to distant places like Korea, Japan, China and Ceylon 'to light the lamp of knowledge in these foreign lands' and we have the names of luminaries like Kumaravijaya, Gunavarman,

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Paramartha, Subhakara Simha, Dharmadeva, and Pou-to-ki-to on record which go to show the international character of the University of Nalanda.

The author has successfully demonstrated in chapter ix that Nalanda was 'far greater than Monte Cassino, and held a more important position in India than Cluny and Clairvaux in France,' that 'what Buddhism did for religion, Nalanda did for learning, and that it was much more than an international university. It was a centre where *bhikshus* assembled from the four quarters of the world, was an abode of Bodhisattvas well-versed in Tantras and of the eight great holy personages, was a library, and finally it was an emporium supplying the four requisites, medicine to the sick, alms to the beggars, garments to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. It will be easy to agree with the author that 'it was at once a monastery for the monks to reside, a University, and a library,.....a hospital and finally a free institution, catering to all the needs of the poor.' The golden age of Nalanda formed part of the Pala period, the Pala kings of Bengal having been great patrons of the monastery. The later art of Nalanda belongs to the art of the Pala empire. Tantrism that found a congenial home at Nalanda opened up a new field, *viz.*, art and iconography. Innumerable images found at Nalanda answering the descriptions detailed in the Tantras gave rise to a new school of art, the Nalanda Art or the Pala Art. A comparative study of these images and those found in Java has led scholars to believe that Nalanda exercised a great influence on the religious life in the Malay Archipelago.

The fall of Nalanda is due to many intrinsic causes that precipitated the downfall of Buddhism. Kumarila and Sankara were two of the greatest opponents of the age. Buddhism was hemmed in from all sides, political, moral and philosophical, and 'only one thing remained to exterminate it, *viz.*, the annihilation of its visible existence, its abodes, the Buddhist monasteries,' and this was accomplished by the Mohammedan invader, Bakhtiyar Khilji, at the beginning of the 13th century. Many a monastery fell, chief of them being Nalanda, Vikramasila and Odantapura.

The author has done his task well and deserves the thanks of all for his valuable contribution. A word of praise is due to the publishers, B. G. Paul and Co. for the excellent

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get-up, faultless letter-press and clear blocks of photographs that the publication under review reveals.

T. N. RAMACHANDRAN

Bulletin of League of Nations Teaching No. 1.—(Published by the Secretariat, League of Nations, Geneva.)

This Bulletin affords very interesting and instructive reading. Prof. Gilbert Murray leads off with a characteristically clear and cogent paper on 'International education Today.' M. Jean Piaget follows with a weighty utterance on 'Is Education for Peace Possible?' Jose Castillejo of the Madrid University writes on 'Education for Peace.' This is by no means a chance grouping. In the first of these papers Prof. Murray draws attention to how much education is being made the means of propaganda. Swords are rattling everywhere in Europe and life is being stampeded by battle cries, if not precisely for active war yet for an internal organisation which, in its technique and atmosphere, is so near to open hostilities. The old political values—liberty and equality—have never been so much in disgrace as now. They are looked upon as things fit only for doddering grannies to talk about. Power, centralization, are the motives of fashionable political craft. In favour of these ideas opinion is being canvassed and the children are being taught accordingly. Naturally the League and its ardent promoters are alarmed. They affirm the importance of education and how education can shape the mind of the young into a sober view of things. Of course to a hasty mind this may very well look like Nero fiddling when Rome was burning. But an altered motive and method of education can produce results only slowly. The results may not be instantaneous but they will be lasting.

The Bulletin contains an excellent resume of the work of the League, and its interest is greatly enhanced by the three wireless talks given by Prof. Anesaki of the Tokio University on 'East and West,' Prof. Shotwell of the Columbia University on 'International Outlook in the Social Sciences,' and Prof. Radhakrishnan on 'The World Challenges the League of Nations,' respectively. Indian readers will doubtless feel greatly and specially interested in one of the best talks ever given by their great countrymen. The Bulletin ends with a

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few official documents which are just what official documents are, very dull but very useful. We do not know if the League could afford to broadcast these bulletins amongst all schools, colleges, public reading rooms and libraries. But every attempt should be made to reach as large a circle as possible, for the League may not in itself be a positive good but it seems to be the only rational alternative to chaos and carnage.

Enchantments.—By V. N. Bhushan, M.A. (The Ananda Academy, Masulipatam.)

In the collection of these poems under the present name 'Enchantments,' Mr. Bhushan sustains his reputation for ardent feeling and fluent and sometimes even eloquent expression. To preserve a distinctly Indian atmosphere in imagery and sentiment—and express oneself in English verse—is not an easy thing; and even so Mr. Bhushan has achieved success. There is no point in comparing a poet's work with that of another and giving him a rank. Mr. Bhushan may not belong to the order of the masters. But he feels sincerely and sings sweetly, and that is enough for most of us.

M. S. C.

Kabir and the Bhakti Movement.—By Mohan Singh, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt. (Published by Atmaram & Sons, Lahore. Pages 100. Price Rs. 2).

Kabir's life and his religious tenets have been a fruitful field of research for scholars both Eastern and Western. The author of the present monograph with his knowledge of Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati and Persian is well qualified to shed new light on a subject, old but eternally new. In his preface he promises the public two more volumes on Kabir, one dealing with his religion, the other dealing with his poetry. The volume under review deals with the biographical details of Kabir, and it has been the author's endeavour to reconstruct the historical image of the medieval saint rescued from the outgrowths of superstitious myths. Some of his findings run counter to the current notions on the subject, and he joins issue with such scholars as Pandit Shyam Sundar Das and Prof. Keay. The author places the fullest reliance on the Sikh sources and his knowledge of the *Adi Granth* enables him to supply the corrective in several contexts. His

conclusions can by no means be said to be final; but such as they are, they may be mentioned here. Kabir was born anywhere between 1360 and 1398 and he died between 1420 and 1449. He was therefore posterior to Ramananda and anterior to Nanak. Kabir was not a direct disciple of Ramananda, nor was Nanak Kabir's disciple. The Goshtis that are on record between such notables as Nanak, Kabir, Goraknath and Dharm Das are all later manufactures by the respective followers to glorify their own Gurus in particular. Kabir Panth was organised in the latter half of the sixteenth century after the model of the Sikh Panth.

This is the picture the author gives of the historical Kabir: 'A Mahomedan of character, independence and conviction; simple in habits, merciful to all, extremely hospitable; rather pugnacious, frank to a fault, assimilative; genuinely fond of a retired, contemplative life, without any ambitions of guruship, picked up and idolized by the hero-worshipping, superstitious and tolerant Hindu and dropped by the intolerant Moslem; we bow to him for all these human virtues; but we refuse to accept him as what the Hindu worshippers have made him out to be, a fallen Brahmin disciple of a Brahmin Vaishnava, who through the grace of his Guru rose to be the greatest mystic of medieval India.'

The form of this monograph is rather to be regretted. It is far from being a connected account of Kabir's life as understood by the author. Several sections are more or less critical notes on published and unpublished records. Some of them could have been conveniently reduced to footnotes. But there is no doubt that, on the whole, the book is an important contribution to Kabir literature and the public may await the other volumes with interest.

Flower Offerings.—By Prabhakar R. Kaikini, with a foreword by Prof. Armando Menezes. (Pages 40. Price Re. 1.)

Ever since Rabindranath Tagore won his world-wide renown, the number of young Indians who seek to realise their literary being in the English language has been on the increase. But prose-poetry, which was a profound symbol of Tagore's triumph, has been in almost all other cases a measure of despair. They have, as Prof. Menezes points out, been forced to 'grapple with the terrors of a foreign tongue,

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swelling the tears of a poet with the tears of a scholar.' Kaikini's 'Flower Offerings' is a collection of early efforts. Tagore is his spiritual master. The very ground and the seedlings of his poetry are derived therefrom. There are far too many echoes of Rabindranath and the very name 'Flower Offerings' (Pushpanjali) is an echo of 'Gitanjali.' Here is a good instance (page 19):

'What are you doing here in this fearful lonely corner, girl?' I asked. 'When the busy throng of buyers subsides, when the merry ducks call no more and vanish into the cool shelter of that yonder grove, when the angry maiden of the noon lies asleep after her passion is gone, when the boatman leaves his ferry to take his food, I come out of my hiding place and cast about this net to catch my long lost glorious dreams of love and life.'

But both language and thought seem to fall off in lines such as these: 'The free souls enjoy free flights of joy in the wideness of infinity reigned over by Thy mercy, O my Lord.' In general, the poems are marked by a sincere and expectant spirit, though the author may not have cultivated in full that universalization of being which can address the Divine in terms at once familiar and intimate. The book is adorned with a frontispiece by Pulin Behari Dutt and is dedicated to Srimathi Sarojini Devi.

G. V. S.

SANSKRIT

Valmiki Ramayana—Condensed in the Poet's own words. Text in Devanagari and English translation by Vidyasagara Vidyavachaspati Prof. P. P. S. Sastri, B.A. (Oxon) M.A.—(Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price Re. 1-4-0.)

It is well-nigh impossible to condense such an intensely mellifluous poem like the Ramayana whose every word is soaked in honey, so to say, and allows no scope for choice. But in these days of hurry and light reading, condensed editions of the classics have become a necessity. And Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., deserve to be congratulated on this score for giving the public a beautiful condensed edition of the epic.

The task of abridging texts is in itself an onerous one and it is even more so in the case of the Ramayana. There are

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passages in the work of Valmiki that are the special favourites of scholars, but no abridgment can include all of them. If a great number of the favourite passages of every scholar find a place in the abridgment, it can be counted as a success. Judged by these standards and the difficulty of condensing, the present edition must be rated a real success. The value of the edition would however have been enhanced if the errata of the Sanskrit matter had been more thorough, and a few at least of the exquisite descriptions of Valmiki, like the Pampavarnana, Jaladagamavarnana, Saradvarnana, Lankavarnana and Pushpakavarnana, had been included in the text. As it is, it appears as if narrative interest has alone been retained at the expense of real poetic beauty. Many incidents from Rama's life that ought to find a place in the narrative are left out. It is impossible to think of Rama's story without the incident of Ahalya's release from her curse. The *Dhanus* (bow) is not mentioned as Siva's. The description of jubilant Ayodhya on the eve of Rama's coronation and Kaikeyi's offer of bark garments to Rama and Sita in the presence of Dasaratha, his whole harem, Vasishta etc., could have been included. Viradha's incident should have found a place in the book. Similarly Rama's jest with Surpanakha. There is no mention of Sarabhanga or Sabari. The tests to which Rama was put by Sugriva find no place in the text. How Lakshmana brought Sugriva to his senses in the *Sarat* season is not mentioned. Though stories like that of Svayamprabha or Sampati admit of omission, others like the story of Visvamitra or the descent of the Ganges, Hanuman's encounter with Simhika, Lanka and Akshaputra, deserve narration. Though some such incidents have been left out, the omission has been more than balanced by a judicious choice of happy passages full of moral teaching and worldly wisdom. It is hoped that a future edition will include these incidents as well. Pandit A. M. Srinivasacharya has achieved a really difficult task.

The translation of the verses in English is another feature of this book and makes it all the more welcome. There are those who, though genuinely interested in a study of the epic, are handicapped for want of good translations. The rendering in English is simple and lucid and helps an understanding of the text. Prof. P. P. S. Sastri has done a real service by giving this translation with the text. The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri contributes a charming preface. It is a book

REVIEWS

that should find a place in every Indian's pocket, to be read and enjoyed at all times. If it were only priced cheaper it would surely reach a wider public and make its mark like the edition of the Bhagavadgita as a popular book. The purpose of this book would be more than achieved if it serves as an introduction to a study of the original text of Valmiki and 'inspires in its readers,' as Professor P. P. S. Sastri desires, 'a yearning to live up to the ideals set forth, and creates a desire for a fuller acquaintance with the rich treasures of Sanskrit poetry.'

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hoped that there would be no dearth of Indian pockets with the lovely Ramayana Diary nestling in them.

Copies can be had of the Hon. Secretary, The Sanskrit Academy, 'The Ashrama,' Luz Church Road, Mylapore, Madras.

C. SIVARAMAMURTHY

TELUGU

Sahitya-Tattva-Vimarsanamu.—By Jonnalagadda Satyanarayananamurty, M.A., B.L. (2, Luz Church Road, Mylapore, Madras, Pages 206. Price Re. 1-4-0.)

This collection of literary essays by Mr. Murty is a sign of the awakening of interest in literature and art among the Andhra public. Criticism has advanced considerably since the days of Viresalingam and Venkatarama Sastry. The journals have thrown open their columns to a discussion of literary topics, and talented scholars like Mr. Murty have eagerly availed themselves of this opportunity to educate their countrymen on the right lines. Mr. Murty is a linguist of high attainments; he has made a special study of Hindi, Bengali and Sanskrit literatures. He is acquainted with the methods of literary criticism in the West. In addition to all this, he is gifted with imagination and sympathy. There is a slight tendency towards verbosity and, in certain places, he is obscure. But these do not touch the substance of his achievement as a critic. We commend this book with the utmost pleasure. Sir S. Radhakrishnan contributes an appreciative Foreword.

K. R.

Opinion of
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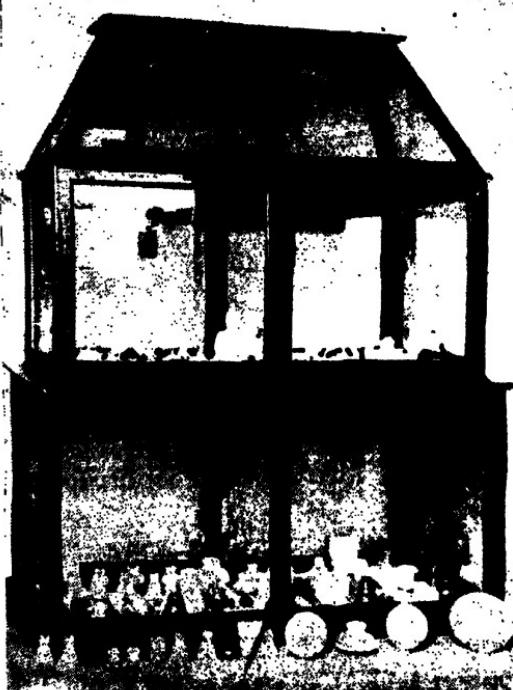
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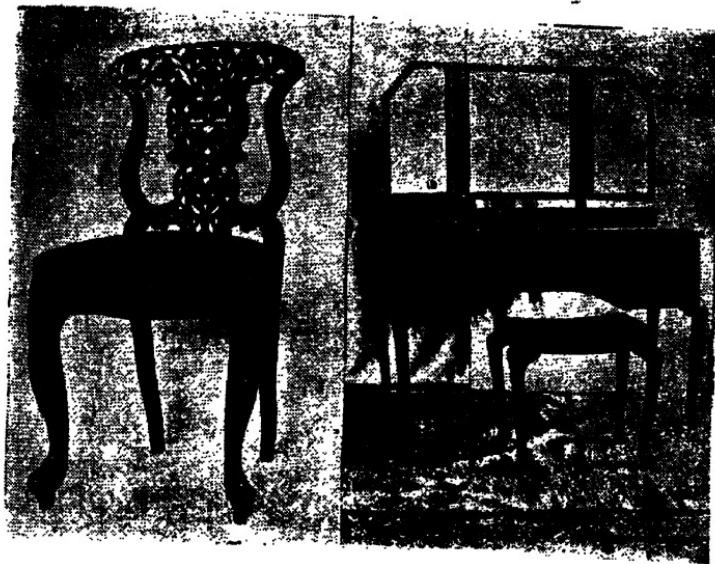
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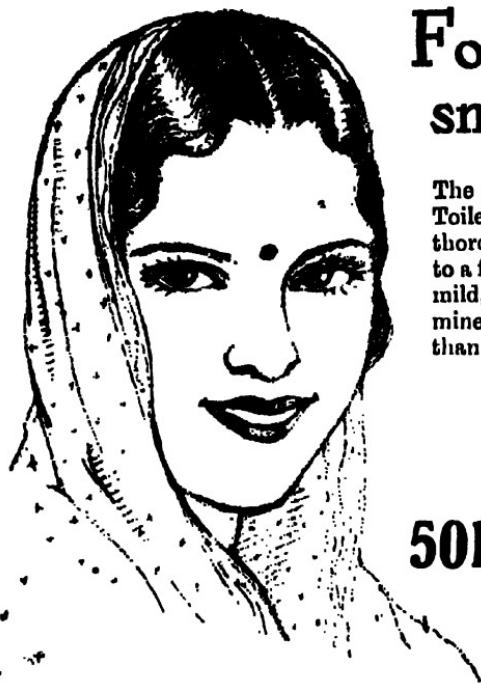
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Vol. VII, No. 6

May-June, 1935

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*... he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!*

—The Song Celestial

'The Triple Stream'¹

THE 'TRIVENI' TRUST

The appeal for a Fund to stabilise *Triveni* was sent out in June, and we are now approaching the end of September. Part of the preliminary organisation was finished in June and July; we were expecting to begin the actual work of collection early in August. But the months of August and September were wasted in attempts to bring out in rapid succession the May-June and July-August issues of the journal and thus satisfy the subscribers to some extent. For lack of a few hundred rupees to pay in full the printer's bills, all printing was held up for six weeks. With considerable difficulty we are publishing the May-June *Triveni* by the fag end of September, and are planning to print the three subsequent issues at intervals of five weeks. This again means that we should have ample funds on hand; these delays, however, make it impossible for us to demand or expect subscriptions. We are repeatedly caught up in a vicious circle. Now, more than ever, we are convinced of the imperative need of a Trust Fund. Between October and April next we propose, with the co-operation of friends everywhere, to realise the greater part of the sum of Rs. 30,000 for this purpose. That there is plenty of goodwill and appreciation is beyond doubt. Only, it needs to be translated into active financial support.

The case for *Triveni* was put eloquently by *The Free Press Journal* of Bombay (4th June, 1935) :

'We invite public attention to an appeal on behalf of *Triveni*, led by Sir S. Radhakrishnan. Much suffering has gone into the making of *Triveni*. The Editor is

¹ 28th September, 1935

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a man incapable of making compromises with the ideal of perfection as conceived by him. The result is, that he literally beggared himself in order to maintain a standard of excellence in the journal so high and lavish that it could never be paid for out of the sales. *Triveni* has ever been a delight to the eye, and a purveyor of magnificent cultural fare; but it has not been a commercial success. Imbued with a sense of appreciation for the traditions it has created, and moved to admiration by the work of the Editor, a few choice helpers have begun to collect funds for a Trust to ensure the permanence of the journal. It is a labour of love which all lovers of the true and beautiful should feel it a privilege to participate in.'

The warm-hearted Editor of *The Free Press Journal* mentions certain facts which the Editor of *Triveni* has always felt great delicacy in mentioning. At some stage, he ought to be free to devote his entire energy to the editorial work, and not be deflected from it by the maddening agony of unpaid bills. Eight years is a long enough period for an individual to struggle through unaided !

DANCE TRADITIONS

In the present number Mr. K. V. Ramachandran continues his illuminating study of the dance traditions of South India. After dealing with the 'Yakshagana' of Karnataka, the 'Kathakali' of Kerala, and the 'Kuchipudi' dance of Andhra, he passes on to the Nautch which has fallen into unmerited disrepute because of its accidental association with the professional Devadasis. Mr. Ramachandran is at once a scholar and an artist and is specially qualified to give an interpretation of the Nautch as it exists today and to correlate it with the technique and practice of the classical dance of ancient India. The illustrations enhance the value of the article ; and in this connection we wish to say how grateful we are to Mr. and Mrs. Ramachandran for posing to the photographer in the varied, graceful attitudes of the dance. Mr. Ramachandran's love of *Natyā* is reflected in the

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disciplined expression of the art by his partner in life. Now that the need has arisen for rescuing the art and winning for it the appreciation which is its due, he has shown rare courage and generosity, and secured her co-operation in this noble task. With the cultivation¹ of a more intelligent attitude towards this ancient art, the dance is bound to come into its own as an essential accomplishment of Indian girls, quite as much as music or literature. Then shall we witness once again the glory of the times when Malavika danced before Agnimitra and the princesses of Ind made their offering of dance at the shrine of Somanath.

SCHOLAR AND STATESMAN

In perusing the speeches and writings of Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha¹ we come into contact with a refined and gracious personality. When a publicist of the standing of Mr. C. Y. Chintamani feels some hesitation in bestowing praise on a senior, lest he should 'appear to be sitting in judgment,' how much greater must be the hesitation of the present writer who had not even learnt the Telugu alphabet by the time *The Hindustan Review* was started in 1900? As the movement for an Andhra Province took shape in 1911, our leaders naturally referred to a similar movement in Behar, and mentioned the names of Mahesh Narayan and Sachchidananda Sinha,—Behari patriots whose love of their home province was not only consistent with, but actually deepened, their love of all-India. As lawyer and publicist, as statesman and scholar, Mr. Sinha stands in the front rank of Indians of an earlier generation. But we specially love to think of him as a journalist who felt an inner urge to launch a high-class journal at a time when daily newspapers monopolised the attention of the Indian Intelligentsia. In fact, he was one of the pioneers of this type of journalism, which seeks to interpret the best in our culture and lays the requisite emphasis on the things of the mind.

¹ A Selection from the *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha* (Published by Ram Narain Lal, Allahabad, Pp. 505, Price Rs. 5.)

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The volume covers a wide range and is illustrative of Mr. Sinha's versatility. Here are speeches in the provincial and all-India legislatures, memoranda submitted to Parliamentary Committees, addresses to music and caste conferences, after-dinner speeches, and intimate personal notes on Pandit Malaviya and Babu Rajendra Prasad. It is dedicated to the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in choice language, breathing the spirit of loyal friendship and affectionate regard.

A COMMONWEALTH OF LITERATURES

We welcome the efforts that are being made by Mr. K. M. Munshi to give an all-India status to our provincial literatures. *Hansa*, the Hindi magazine till now conducted by Sri Premchandji, will hereafter be edited conjointly by Sjs. Munshi and Premchandji. It will publish articles about the different literatures, with personal sketches of writers and poets, and translations into Hindi of the more valuable literary pieces. *Triveni* has similar aims, and since 1928, it has bestowed a great deal of attention on the literary and cultural movements in Andhra, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and other linguistic units of India. In fact, this has been a prominent feature of *Triveni*, and it is not quite accurate today to say that 'we know the latest literary and cultural activity in England, but not that of our neighbouring province.'

While we readily recognise that it is useful to conduct a magazine in Hindi for the benefit of all Indian provinces, we believe that it is not less important that Indian literature should keep in touch with the literature of the world by the publication of articles on the Indian literatures, and translations of poems, plays and stories, in an international language like English. There are many ways in which *Triveni* and *Hansa* can co-operate with advantage. There is, however, a widespread feeling in South India that, in their zeal for the propagation of Hindi, the *pracharaks* are making exaggerated claims on its behalf, and referring to the literatures in Kannada, Tamil or Telugu with condescension. It is one thing to say that, as Hindi is spoken by the largest number of Indians, it might

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eventually serve as a medium of communication between province and province. It is altogether different to exalt it to the position of a national language and impose it on all provinces, to the detriment of the local language. We draw a distinction between a common language and a national language. There are several sub-nationalities in India, and to them their mother-tongue is the national language and also the prime vehicle of creative self-expression. Hindi is not inherently superior to Telugu or Bengali ; nor is its literature as rich and varied as theirs. We respectfully warn Mr. Munshi against the subtle danger that lurks behind the Hindi movement. The *Hansa* must steer clear of it.

Sonnet

How like a ship upon a shoreless main
I voyage with dread blank on every side.
A grey monotony of chilly rain
Unchangingly along the changing tide

. Heaves hugely . . . yet, within myself I hide
Eternal voyagers who seek again
The light, more beautiful than any bride,
Starring stupendous heavens without a stain.

Billow on clashing billow, see me climb
Each time with greater sureness than before,
While the wide challenging waters round me chime
Enormous rhythms of the Evermore.
And since the ship takes no account of time,
Mileage exists not, nor a sense of shore.

Written 4—7—34}
Pondicherry }

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA

The Challenge of Nationalism

By HIRENDRA NATH MUKERJEE, M.A. (Cal.) B.A., B.Litt. (Oxon.)

BAR-AT-LAW

(*Lecturer, Andhra University*)

I

The Austrian poet, Grillparzer, once remarked that 'humanity, through nationality, returns to bestiality.' To prophets of nationality like Mazzini, nationalism was the very breath of life stirring in a people; while to Acton, it seemed to be something sinister, whose course, he predicted, 'will be marked by material and moral ruin, in order that a new invention may prevail over the interests of mankind.' Acton was not far wrong if we take into account the post-war world, which exhibits the menace of opposing nationalisms to the unity or even the maintenance of civilisation. Despite Geneva and Locarno, and talks of European Customs Unions and armament protocols, and despite the contempt with which the idea of nationality is regarded by men like Tagore, it would be folly to forget that the problem of nationality and of national jealousies is still far from a solution. 'To refuse,' said Lenin, referring to nationalism, 'the thing that is, cannot be permitted: recognition forces itself.' It would be blindness to ignore, for instance, that economic nationalism is a dominant feature of the world today, that import 'quotas,' export bounties, subsidised railway rates to and penal railway rates from the frontiers, and a whole labyrinth of measures for the restriction of international exchanges, have been and are being elaborated by the civil services of different countries. A certain British economist, we hear, keeps a 'tariff map' of the world. He puts up along the many frontiers little paper walls varying in height to indicate the scale of the tariffs of each State. Europe, on his map, resembles, says John Strachey, nothing so much as the cross

section of a prison with each nation cowering immured in its own little economic cell. Great Britain has become a protectionist country. Ottawa intended the isolation of the British Empire from the current of world trade—an intention that has been partly thwarted, not so much by the forces of economic internationalism, as by acute national rivalries within the Empire. International lending has come almost to a standstill. The United States Congress is in a frenzied nationalist mood. France and Germany are not exactly friendly. Starvation stalks in Eastern and Central Europe against a background of bitter internecine hostility.

Nationalism has, indeed, become something like a new religion. The hooked cross of Germany, the statue of Italia, the eternal flame burning before the grave of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, are the symbols of worship. The 'Buy British' mood of Britain expresses, with less theatricality, the same spirit; the recent mass hysteria over the King's Jubilee is another Anglo-Saxon variation on the same theme. One needs only a conversation with a young, ingenuous Italian fascist; one needs only to have been present at students' meetings, even in pre-Hitler Germany, where the proceedings opened with the spirited singing of 'Deutschland, über alles,' or to have read Moller van den Bruck's 'Germany's Third Empire' or Friedrich Sieburg's 'Germany, my country'; one needs only to have tramped the streets of Paris all day on July 14, the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, to be persuaded of the strength and genuineness of nationalist fervour. It is not so difficult to understand the causes of Hitler's amazing ascendancy, after one reads the report of a speech by Professor Naumann at a teachers' conference at Cologne: 'It may sound barbaric, but nevertheless it is true: Germany has an abundance of beautiful poems, splendid grammars and philosophical systems. Even if nothing new were added to it, we would have a treasure on which we could live for hundreds of years to come. But of Danzig or Vienna, or of the Saar district of Eupen, there is a great lack at present

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in Germany. For all that, Danzig and Vienna are at the moment more beautiful to us than a beautiful poem and more valuable than a clever book,—especially if the beautiful poem or the clever book were such that they could have been made as well in Paris or Poland.¹ The Saar, which was a kind of barometer of German national prestige, is now part of the Fatherland, as a result of a memorable plebiscite which has been the high-water mark of recent German nationalism. But, as every newspaper reader knows, there is no lack in Europe today of 'irredentas' which are like so many powder magazines liable to be suddenly on fire. The Polish corridor, the district of Vilna, Upper Silesia and Macedonia, zones in dispute between Italy and Austria, between Italy and Jugo-Slavia, between Hungary and Roumania, between Hungary and Jugo-Slavia, between Italy and Greece—are all danger-spots where the light of peace finds it hard to penetrate. On top of all this, there are the claims of puissant nations to what are euphemistically called 'places in the sun'—most notably, today, of Italy in Africa and of Japan in the Far East. It is no wonder, then, that the recurrent theme in contemporary politics is the problem of peace, which largely resolves itself into the problem of nationalism and its sinister corollary, imperialism.

The historical evolution of modern nationalism takes us little further back than some 150 years. The peculiar conditions of England were responsible for its appearance there earlier than anywhere else. Henry VIII, hungering for matrimonial bliss, invoked it in the name of religion: Elizabeth, with her eye on overseas trade and the spoil of Spanish galleons, invoked it with incantations on 'this precious stone, set in a silver sea.' France before 1789 was little more than a congeries of Gascons, Provencals, Bretons, Normans, Alsatians and others; the defence of the Revolution against

¹ 'Berliner Borsenzeitung' Dec. 20, 1933; quoted in 'International Literature,' No. 4, 1934.

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the alliance of crowned heads began French nationalism. German nationalism was created by Napoleon; Fichte's 'Addresses to the German Nation,' which became the Bible of German patriotism, followed the battle of Jena and preceded the War of Libération in 1813. Italians, oppressed and divided by priests, Bourbons and Hapsburgs, found a release in the hope, magistrally expressed by Mazzini, to lead the world again as they had done from the time of St. Francis to that of Michelangelo. Slav nationalism, pugnaciously prominent since 1848, claimed from the rest of the world a reverent acknowledgment of its primacy in mysticism and the not easily discernible wisdom which is supposed to be its concomitant.

Dostoevsky once said that every people must look upon itself as the 'God-bearing people' in order to have any faith in its future. Danger lurks in this advice, for there is no knowing when a nation comes to believe in its monopoly of God's wisdom, and if it does, its evangelical zeal may not be palatable to other peoples. To Mazzini, nationality was sacred, because 'God has written one line of his thought on the cradle of each nation.' England, he decided, was to specialise in business and colonisation, Russia to civilise Asia, Poland to be the champion of the slavs; Germany was to think, France to act, and Italy to unite thought and action. A non-Italian, presumably, was expected to acquiesce, without demur, in the pre-eminent role assigned to Italy. Mazzini refused to Ireland a national mission of its own and therefore its claim to national independence: of Asia, he did not deign to think more than to consign her to the tender mercies of 'civilisers' from imperialist Britain and Czarist Russia. With all his desire to be fair as between different European nations, his predilection for his own continually broke out in rapturous panegyrics on the Italy that was to be.

In a recent Nazi book, 'The Fundamentals of Anthropology' by Professor Hermann Gauch, there occurs this astounding statement: 'The non-Nordic is not a 100% human being; he is, in fact, not a human being at all, if

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compared with the animal, but merely an intermediary, a link . . . [he] comes next to the man-apes.' Nothing very different, probably, was meant by Fichte when he said that 'to have character and to be German undoubtedly mean the same.' His 'Addresses' of 1807 begin by explaining the superiority of the German to all others, because he alone had a pure language. He forgot, Bertrand Russell points out with his inimitable irony, that the Russians, Turks and Chinese, not to mention the Eskimos and Hottentots, had also pure languages. Hitler's henchmen today look upon race, not language, as the proof of German superiority: they are not without their forbears. Irish professors have written books to prove that Homer was an Irishman. French anthropologists have given archaeological evidence that the Celts, not the Teutons, were the pioneers of civilisation in northern Europe. Houston Chamberlain, the mysterious Englishman who did not live to see himself canonised by the Nazi movement, argued at length that Dante was a German and Christ was not a Jew. Anglo-Indians have always emphasised race and, through Kipling, imperialist England has caught the infection.¹

A nation, as any text-book on politics will tell us, connotes a geographical group and a sentiment of solidarity. This sentiment has considerable affinities with the crowd spirit. In times of crisis, particularly, a nation behaves as a crowd does; the emotional tone of both is more or less similar: there is the same unreasoning love and hate, the same inflated egoism, the same de-individualising sense of absorption into a larger whole, the same thrill of a vaguely apprehended common purpose. The cheering crowds before Buckingham Palace on the day of the declaration of war on Germany, genuinely represented, for the time being, the entire British nation.

The sentiment of national solidarity may be due to a common language, a supposed common descent, a common

¹See Bertrand Russell's 'Freedom and Organisation' (1934), and his article on 'The Revolt against Reason' in *Political Quarterly* Jan—March 1935.

culture and traditions, or common interests and common dangers. In the majority of cases, all these play a part in producing national sentiment, but however the sentiment is produced, it is the only essential to the existence of a nation. As Renan discovered, it is impossible to define nationality except in terms of the sense of nationality, which, obviously, is a reality. We think ourselves a nation, and we are a nation ; ‘tis thinking makes it so.’ But, of course, we do not think that way till the stage is set for it,—which accounts for the late emergence of nationalism in history. We must not forget that nationalism, as such, is not a bit more ‘natural’ than tribalism, clannishness or imperialism ; we can shake it off when the material environment so demands. The authors and propagandists of modern nationalism have been the men of brains—and, this is important, of some means—belonging most often to the middle classes. The time had come for them to assert themselves and they did, through the medium, very largely, of nationalism that, fortunately, had in it elements which could powerfully attract the masses. Palacky, the great historian and nationalist of Bohemia, tells us¹ that if the ceiling of the room in which he and some of his friends were dining one night had collapsed, the Czech nationalist movement would have been destroyed ; it was still of a small group and had not yet captured the masses. Equally illuminating tales—though Palacky’s conclusion is a little too sweeping—might be told of the beginnings of nationalism in many countries.

Nationalism, thus, is not instinctive with the masses, any more than with the classes. Most of us are nationalists, because our fathers have, consciously or unconsciously, drilled us into it. It never occurs to us to question the adoration of the flag or other national symbols. This is because our mind is a social product : we repeat, without knowing it, the formulas and fantasies and frauds that are ‘of good repute.’ Nationalism, besides, is strong because it touches a genuine

¹ C. J. H. Hayes, ‘Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism’ (Ed. 1981) P. 284.

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chord in our hearts ; it strives, however clumsily, to satisfy our hunger for community. But its form and character have been determined by history, which clearly disproves its immutability ; at critical junctures, for example, class interests have been found more powerful than considerations of national policy. The French emigres, we all know, helped Germany against France in 1792 ; the Russian middle classes allied themselves alternately with Germany and the Entente Powers against the Revolution ; the ruling classes in the East who, for a time, welcomed Russian revolutionary propaganda as an aid in the struggle against European imperialism, later got alarmed at the danger to their own interests and opposed it bitterly. Nationality, of course, admits, in theory, no grades, no hierarchy of membership : but, as a matter of fact, the susceptibility of the helpless masses to propaganda which money controls, means in the last resort the dominance of a class. The smoke-screen of nationalism is so often put up, that the people may not notice the deception. It is a relief, therefore, to be able to know that nationalism is not an unchangeable element of our nature, that it is permissible to hope for a time, in the distant future maybe, when the inconvenient idiosyncrasies of locality will not hamper our common humanity.

But this should not blind us to the phenomenal power for good and for evil that nationalism commands today. For the present, at any rate, both tribalism and the antipodal position of cosmopolitanism are definitely unsatisfactory. We cannot afford to forget the lesson of the debacle of international socialism during the Great War. The Basle manifesto of 1912 became a dead letter two years later and erstwhile socialists flocked to fight under their national banners. A mere scratch discovered that they were still more in love with their nation than with the common cause of the workers of the world. We must not forget, on the other hand, the part played by love of country in the first great victory of socialism. The spectacle of Russian courtiers, generals, landowners, capitalists and merchants, the very men

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who claimed a monopoly of patriotism, invading their own country in a desperate effort to recover their profits, with the ubiquitous aid of the invading expeditions of half the world, did not a little to rally the masses of the people to fight for a socialism which meant also their national liberation. We must, in short, if we learn from history, discover an internationalism which does better justice by the notion of the local community.

III

Over a sixth of the earth's surface, in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the national question is being tackled in a manner which alone promises to solve the problems of nationalism. The immoral gospel of the nation is one of the most lethal dangers of our age and it is, unhappily, on the forefront of the programmes of men like Mussolini and Hitler. In the U. S. S. R. nationalism is assigned a relative character; there is no question of a fulfilment of nationhood for its own sake, for the sake of its sublimity and its historic mission. With the achievement of socialism, nationalism as we know it will disappear; it is being taken into account at present only in order that the final goal may be more expeditiously reached.¹

Even the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Union do not deny that its 'national policies,' the treatment, in other words, of former subject peoples of the Czarist empire, are one of its most notable successes. In one great gesture after the Revolution, the Union renounced all priorities and capitulations and concessions and privileges which the Czarist government had enjoyed in Asiatic countries along with the other Great Powers. Lenin expanded the slogan, 'Proletarians of the world, unite,' into 'Proletarians of all countries, and oppressed peoples of all the world, unite!', and the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia was followed almost immediately by a proclamation to the

¹ In this section, I have borrowed heavily from Hans Kohn's very valuable book on 'Nationalism in the Soviet Union' (Ed. 1933).

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Mohammedan workers of Russia and the East, calling on them to organise their national life in complete freedom and with the aid, whenever necessary, of the Russian proletariat. The banner of the Union dispensed with all national emblems—the lions, eagles and bears, the beasts of prey of the State—and showed, as symbols of the new evangel of labour, a sickle and hammer on a sun-lit globe framed in ears of corn, with interwoven ribbons bearing in different languages the motto : ‘Proletarians of all countries, unite!’

Within the territory of the U. S. S. R. there are extremes, not only of climate but also of culture. But where the Czar’s Government had violently to repress scores of subject peoples, the Soviet Union has been able to encourage every ethnic group within its borders. The culturally advanced Ukrainian and the nomadic, illiterate Uzbek, the Great Russian and the gypsy, are equally free to develop their national personalities. Huge amounts have been spent for providing the basis for local industries in the national republics. Scores of races and millions of people were condemned under the pre-revolutionary system to what has been called ‘planned backwardness.’ Bolsheviks, on the other hand, have begun to build a textile industry in Turkestan, where cotton can be grown, and under their fostering care, distant Caucasus is becoming an industrial centre. There has, then, been no remissness in recognising that it would be sheer hypocrisy to suggest that the Uzbek was ‘free’ to develop his culture if, in the absence of industrial equipment, he had to toil sixteen hours a day; he must have freedom of a very different sort from the freedom we all have ‘to own a Rolls and dine at the Ritz.’

Before the revolution, the language of the administration, the Courts and the government schools for the whole Empire, was Russian, though Russians formed no more than 43% of the population. There was, of course, one official religion, that of the Orthodox Church, and all non-Russians, in Asia and along the Volga, had no civil rights. Until 1905, it was illegal to print books in Ukrainian, White Russian and

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Lithuanian. Today in the U. S. S. R., with its 185 peoples and 147 languages, there is no imposed privilege for a people or for a language. Elaborate minority legislation assures to the minorities, among other things, their schools and the official employment of their own languages. For a number of languages, even alphabets had to be improvised. Local officials and members of economic bodies, if they happen to be outsiders, have got to learn the local language. There are now academies for issuing dictionaries, publishing institutions, libraries, theatres, museums, historical and scientific societies, in formerly barbarous tracts; the film and the wireless are steadily being requisitioned for the purpose of developing the languages. Since 1929, the Latin script has replaced, throughout the Union, the complicated Arabic, calculated, as it were, to prolong the cultural sleep of the Asiatic peoples; the way was led by Azerbaijan, the first Mohammedan state to renounce the Arabic script, even before Kemalist Turkey, and to adopt legislation for women's emancipation. Moscow gypsies have issued the first wall-newspaper and staged the first play in their gypsy language. 'Red Yurts' and 'Red kitabikas' have been instituted in areas inhabited by nomads and semi-nomads.—transportable tents with which teacher and doctor and midwife and library go from camp to camp. 'The mountain women's huts' work in a similar way in the Caucasian mountains and their remote and sequestered valleys.

The propaganda for women's emancipation has been in full force since 1927; it was not possible earlier to make a frontal attack on age-long superstitions in some of the most backward tracts of the world. Before the Soviet could intervene, 'unfaithful' women were done to death by stoning. Many women, whose names we do not know, paid with their lives for laying aside the veil or for other modernising tendencies. It was not till the Communist Party was strong enough among the indigenous populations that it became possible to combat energetically the influence of the feudal landowner and the Mohammedan priesthoods with their

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ecclesiastical courts. Wife-purchase and rapine are now punishable offences ; but, unlike in modern Turkey, there has been no direct legislation against the veil. Today in such advanced Mohammedan territories as the Crimea, one never sees the veil, though it still lurks in remote nooks of Central Asia. In recent years, more than 1500 women have been elected chairmen of village soviets in the eastern Soviet states. The Supreme Court of Justice in Kazakhstan had in 1932 a woman president ; another was a member of the Council of People's Commissars. The youth of the Mohammedan peoples, young men and women alike, are firmly treading the path of progress, and this has all been due to the remarkable success of the Union's 'Nationality policy.' The freedom for national minorities has produced a high flower of culture ; a new intellectual life is astir on sites where superstition and dark ecclesiastical reaction once reigned supreme.

IV

The *welfare* of different peoples, thus, is mutually compatible, but their *power*, with its cruel concomitant, competition, is not. Socialism, essentially international, provides, as the Russian example shows, an objective basis for co-operation instead of conflict between the peoples of the world. Capitalist states, on the other hand, as Mr. Hawtrey, himself a highly intelligent defender of capitalism, pointed out in his 'Economic Aspects of Sovereignty,' are always conscious that the gain of one country is necessarily loss to others, and its loss gain to them. Conflict, thus, is of the essence of the pursuit of power: the bellicosity of Fascism, whose idol is the nation-state, illustrates this to a fault. In the context of capitalism, it is impossible for nationalism to shake off its Jacobin heritage, and the insane forces of destruction will gambol freely with our fates. All the experience we can garner from history, past and present, tells us that Capitalism cannot lead us, as men like H. G. Wells seem fondly to hope, to world monopoly and so to peace, through gentle mergings of trusts and scientific federations of nations.

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It seems more probable that capitalist peace can only be established after a fight to the death among the great monopolist groups ; it would be a desert peace, the dread sequel to the last supreme war of the world.

Nationalism has, indeed, still a work to accomplish among the colonial peoples. A worm is in the staff of the imperial powers, and it shall not be long before immense populations in Asia and Africa, that are today more or less their property, will find release from their bondage. But it is essential that there should be a conjunction of the forces of socialism and of nationalism, that there should be a relentless attack on that hydra-headed monster, imperialism, that the appeal of our liberation movement should be based, not alone on tribal community but on the wider community of social justice. It is doubtful if, in the absence of such conjunction, colonial peoples will be able to win : but even if they do, we shall see a crude repetition of the senseless disasters of present day nationalism—disputed irredentas, economic rivalries and their sinister concomitants. The Fascist tendency of idolising the nation-state as a mystical instrument that at once completes and transcends the individual, will be in the ascendant. No one dares dismiss lightly the significance of nationalism, so immense in its influence, so instinct with tradition. But nationalism is, after all, the modern counterpart of tribalism, and it would be suicidal to enthrone it in our world on the adamantine basis which Fascism intends to provide for it.

We have, thus, to avoid the Scylla of tribalism that ignores the demands of civilisation and the Charybdis of a cosmopolitanism that does not yet strike a sufficiently responsive chord in men's hearts. We can only do this, if nationalism and internationalism are both placed on a definitely socialist basis. It is no good being vaguely humanitarian, being naively rhapsodic about the brotherhood of all men. A mere pacifism is bound to be scoffed at and overwhelmed in times of crisis. It would be salutary, therefore, to remember that the brotherhood of man is an ideal which can only be

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realised under a different social system, and that the urgent task of today is to do our best to hasten the advent of that system. It is imperative to think more of the brotherhood—the tangible unity of interests—of the workers of the world, of every nationality. Within the borders of a nation, besides, the national spirit can only be real, when we have put an end to the exploitation which divides fellow nationals into conflicting classes. It is for socialists to make men feel that socialism alone can reconcile the claims of nationalism with the claims of cosmopolitan loyalty.

The aim of all government must be welfare, not power, before we can hope for a progressive unification of the world. Capitalism with its gospel of power, its competitive national loyalties, blocks the path to a saner and happier order. It has had its hour, when it performed a great historic function: but now it is an encumbrance, its recurrent crises are longer and more acute, its periods of revival shorter and rarer. With nationalism, it has formed an alliance whose effect is disorder and disaster; it is an unholy alliance, for, who can deny that capitalist imperialism is trampling upon the patriotism of a dozen peoples? It seems to excite for its own purposes a brutal parody of patriotism, a banal jingoism in the more powerful countries. We must, therefore, remember that capitalism, of which imperialism is the highest stage, represses on purpose the fullest development of nations which can conveniently be exploited, and keeps them, as the empire of the Tsars was kept, in a sort of planned backwardness. Nationalism, if it deserves to claim our loyalty, must, then, be put on a socialist basis. We hope, indeed, for a time when nationalism, as we know it, shall be relegated to the museum of antiquities, when the cultural heritage of the race will be pooled in a human synthesis. That, however, is a distant ideal; none of us, perhaps, will live to see it in practice. For the moment, nationalism seems, from one angle, a colossal power for evil; from another, a tremendous power for good, if only it is allied with the struggle for a society where the conflict of classes will have ceased, where opportunity will be

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organised on the basis of the principle of equality. The hope of the world lies in this alliance between socialism and nationalism ; the sole example of such an alliance is found to have released the creative energy of scores of neglected peoples in the U. S. S. R. Without it, the prospect for the future is uninviting, for, in that case, as Bertrand Russell aptly quotes from Milton to introduce his ' Freedom and Organisation ':

'Chaos umpire sits, And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all.'

Dance Traditions of South India¹

By K. V. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A.

(Exclusive to 'TRIVENI')

(4)

The unit of the classical dance was the cadence known as 'karana'; a sequence of the 'karanas,' was the 'angahara,' and a tableau based on these, in which one or more than one dancer took part, was the 'pindibandha.' These cadences divided themselves into two types—the energetic masculine and the dainty feminine, named 'tandava' and 'lasya' and ascribed to Siva and Parvati respectively—cadences of pure dance that embellished and variegated the 'purvaranga' (prelude) of the ancient drama which, prior to their introduction, was plain and bare. The 'karanas' constituted an invocation and offering to the Gods, as well as a pictorial treat to the audience. Though originally requisitioned to enrich and beautify the preliminaries of the play, as the play grew and developed, these 'karanas' worked themselves into the body of the play, not only as decorative units but also as the basis and resource of the complex expression called 'abhinaya.' The assimilation, by the text of the play, of these cadences as pure dance and as media of 'abhinaya' perhaps led to the eventual elimination of the 'purvaranga.' The advent of the 'karanas' and their reactions on the drama and dramatists at a vital period of their evolution, is a chapter that deserves the closest study. The love situations of the drama, when interpreted by these dainty 'lasya' cadences, led to the extension of the meaning of the term 'lasya' to include not only the dance cadences and 'abhinaya' through them, but also the love situations so interpreted, the songs that embodied these, the music that was specially appropriate for them, as Abhinavagupta says, and, we may add, even the delicate

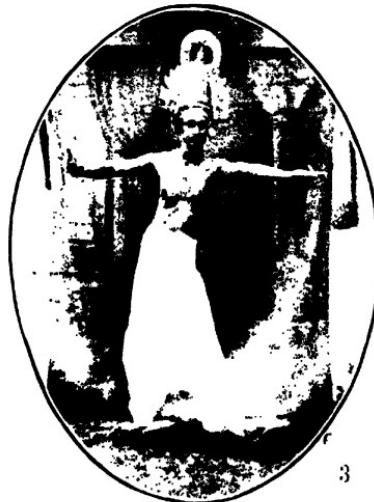
¹The previous article appeared in *Triveni* for Jan.—Feb., 1935.

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cadences of the drum. Thus, what was originally the feminine analogue of the 'tandava,' at a later stage denoted a whole group of arts that had gathered round it when it interpreted the love themes and programmes of poets. Ten such essential love-themes were the 'lasyangas' of the later chapters of the *Natya Sastra*, designed to be rendered by a single danseuse. It is not easy to surmise whether the compositions comprised under the term 'lasyangas' represented 'nritya-prabandhas' that developed independently of the drama, but later got incorporated into it in some form, or whether it was the drama that gave them birth; nor is it possible to visualise each of these 'angas' in perfect detail. In one of them it is a dream that is the starting point of a delicious reverie; in another it is the image of the beloved that inspires a train of tender recollections; every note of Love is represented in these 'lasyangas,' petulance, reproof, reluctance and graciousness, and every phase of distress that separation provokes. Eight similar themes are enumerated by the *Silappadikaram* under the general name 'vari.' 'Lasya' compositions formed an important section of dance-poems in Tamil, illustrations of which are to be found, among others, in the anthologies *Kalithokai* and the *Divyaprabandham*. And in the art of the Arayars, the temple dancers of Tamil India, the 'abhinaya' exposition of the sacred 'pasurams' lives even today at Srirangam and Alwar-Tirunagari. And the learned commentators of the *Divyaprabandham* have left us authentic records of the occasions when the great Ramanuja, a master of 'abhinaya' himself, corrected the renderings of the Arayars when they went astray.

The term 'lasyanga' had still another meaning when it referred to those essential delicacies of poise and turn, of curve and glance that were present in and accompanied certain 'desi' (provincial) applications of the 'lasya' cadences. The essentials were not 'desi,' but their nomenclature was,—the reason why Sarangadeva calls them 'desi lasyangas.'

The nautch as practised by the Devadasis in South India



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today embodies all these varieties of 'lasya.' The 'alarippu' is a dance invocation made up of some of those dainty cadences with which the ancient artists adored the deities at the commencement of the drama. The 'varna,' 'pada,' 'javali' and other compositions based upon various phases and situations of Love—the entire dance-anthology that makes up the current 'abhinaya' performance—bears more than a family resemblance to the 'lasyangas' of *Natyasastra* and is in all probability descended from them. The 'tillana' of the Nautch, the 'modi' of the 'Therukkoothu' and the 'kinjin' of the Oothukkadu-Soolamangalam Bhagavatas, among others, make purposive use of some of those 'desi lasyangas' that Sarangadeva has recorded. The Tamil equivalent for 'lasya,' according to a quotation abstracted by Adiyarkunallar, is 'mey'; and it is curious that a form of feminine dance called 'mey' is in vogue at Soolamangalam and is rendered ably by my friend Mr. Swaminatha Iyer, playing the role of a woman.

The foregoing would explain the bias of the Devadasi art for predominantly erotic themes and its essentially feminine character. Indeed Love is the supreme preoccupation of the Nautch; its programmes are lit with Love. It is not suggested that vigorous and forceful elements are absent from this art,—in fact the 'nritta' passages abound in powerful attitudes and movements, for instance, figure (4) which illustrates the middle of a Nautch cadence which could very appropriately introduce a Bhima, also those 'abhinaya' situations where Man is portrayed. But on the whole the character of the Nautch is feminine, such femininity revealing itself not only in the 'abhinaya' themes like the 'javali' and the 'pada,' but also in the impersonal dances, especially those patterned sequences that make up the 'tillana': this 'tillana' may be defined as the portrait of Woman, the incarnation of all earthly Beauty and eternal theme of Art, by a lovely young woman, through the dainty feminine dance 'lasya.' What a profound knowledge of the character and significance of the Nautch do modern reformers reveal when they want to

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expunge it of ‘sringara’ or replace it with ‘raudra’ and ‘bhibhatsa’ *rasas!* They would have the Nautch, like music, as a handmaid of loyalty, health and sanitation ! It is fortunate that notwithstanding these reformers and decades of anti-nautch activities, the art continues to live and has produced several great artists—Ammalu of Pudukkottah and Gnanam of Tiruvalur, to mention only two,—in the past. Srimati Gouri of Mylapore is by far the ablest exponent of ‘abhinaya’ among the seniors of today ; it would be invidious to single out individual artists from the younger generation, but an exception must be made in the case of Varalakshmi of Kumbakonam whose dances are marvels of precise and beautiful co-ordination.

The pedigree of this art could be traced as far back as the *Silappadikaram* to the ‘ariyakkoothu’ and ‘akamargam’ which in a later age came under the loving care and protection of the great-souled Chola emperors, and was presumably taught by Brahmins—‘Bhagavata-melas’ as their guilds were known (the ‘natya-kutapa’ of Bharata’s terminology) whose descendants are practising a dramatic variety of it in certain villages of Tamil Nad and Andhra desa. From internal evidence, one is led to suspect that Gopalakrishna Bharati who chose the ‘nrithamurti’ himself as the theme of his immortal music-drama, the Nandan Charitram, was a Bhagavata—that is a dancer himself : his is therefore the tribute of a professional to the Master of Dance. A vital part of Krishna Bhagavatar’s art was his dance and the dance tradition persisted till very recently in our ‘katha kalakshepams.’ The ‘harikatha bhagavatars’ of the present day have a confused art-lineage and some of them none at all.

A considerable section of Nautch music is traceable to these early ‘bhagavatas.’ At some stage in its history, the art passed on to the ‘natuva melas’—the guilds of non-brahmin teachers of dance—and the secrets of the art are jealously guarded by these people today. This community of dance masters has also produced several great men in the past, especially the brothers Sivanandam, Ponnayya and

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Vadivelu at whose hands, about a hundred years ago, the performances appear to have undergone some editing and assumed their present form condensed into the 'single day's programme' made up of select items of dance and 'abhinaya' in the choice of which the taste of the last kings of Tanjore was perhaps in some measure reflected. Redactions presuppose the omission of forms due to exigencies of various kinds and it is probable that the preparation of this dance anthology involved many omissions; it would therefore be wrong to look upon the present day survival as representing the entire art, because contemporary literature gives us a richer picture of forms, in comparison with which the Nautch repertoire looks impoverished somewhat. Out of this limited repertoire the 'mey' is rendered by a single Brahmin artist today at Soolamangalam; the 'modi' has almost vanished, and the 'daru' survives in the dramatic traditions only; while the 'swarajati' and 'ragamalika' are remembered, they are not in evidence at performances; and as the first sign of the progressive administration of temples, dance service is discarded, the beautiful cadences of 'malappu' are being fast unlearned.

Nautch music (to distinguish it from the musician's music) untouched by modern influences, remains a purer, more beautiful and refined form of the art. The music forms are common to both, but the music is different and distinctive,—a fact that people are slow to recognise on account of the inefficiency of the Nautch musicians of the present generation. The beautiful 'varna' in 'Bhairavi' by Adiyappayya and the equally beautiful ones of Govindaswamy are dance 'varnas.' If the great Tyagaraja had written plays, he might have fashioned such music as awaits us in the dramas of Soolamangalam and Oothukkadu. Were one given the choice, one would unerringly specify the 'padas' of Kshetragna as our highest musical creations.—slow, expansive, architectural—and these 'padas' constitute a rich heritage from the Nautch. It is unfortunate that specialists in these 'padas' are so few and their number is fast dwindling.

While the art remained faithful to the precepts which

ensured its preservation, its terminology has to some extent been vernacularised in Tamil India,—a phenomenon common to all localised forms of art. Thus the name 'adavu' designates, in the Tamil districts, a cadence—of the hands, of the feet, of the neck and of the hip individually, also a co-ordination of these and identified by a syllabic label that furnished at the same time a rhythmic basis for the movements concerned. A sequence made up of a specific floor-contact and a patterned movement of the hands is an 'adavu' and recognised by a syllabic label; but this label comprises several similar and dissimilar sequences—whole groups of them in fact—and these are among the first things that the beginner has to learn to execute with fidelity, and consequently with grace. However gifted a person, a thorough discipline in these is an inescapable part of dance education just as alphabets and words are predetermined and inexorable essentials of a literary, and 'swara' and 'tala' of a musical, education. No sensible person would ever want to discard these basic essentials or furnish his own equivalents for them or reform them before he has understood them. The 'thattadavu' which comprises a homogeneous group of floor-contacts was familiar to the grammarians as the 'samapadakuttanam.' In the same way the 'nattithattadavu' in its three varieties was termed 'purakshepakuttanam' (fig. 3) 'paschatshepkuttanam' and 'parsvakshepkuttanam' (fig. 4) according as the foot was planted in front, behind, or at side. This 'adavu' label comprises a cadence involving a jump and semi-circular steps to the accompaniment of opening and closing 'alapallava' and 'sandamsa' *hastas*; this was the 'utpluti-uttanam.' The 'dhi ti tai' which is the invariable finale of most dance sequences, really a variety of the 'nattadavu' in quick time accompanied by various kinds of patterned movements of the hands, was the 'padaparsvakuttanam.' An even movement of the feet with a simultaneous circular movement of the hands had the syllabic label 'digi digi.' The 'thattimettadavu,' a floor-contact involving the balls of the feet (fig. 16), was the 'santadyaparshnikuttanam.'

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The 'anukkuradavu' was the 'mridusparsanam.' A few of the ancient 'bhramaris' too one meets with in the disguise of 'adavus.' This list of 'adavus' is capable of endless multiplication. My purpose in referring to them here is to show that the intricacies of the Nautch have been minutely studied, labelled and classified by artist-scholars in the past and it is no fault of theirs if some today, who are neither scholars nor artists, misjudge the art and its resources.

The 'karana' was the rhythmic co-ordination of the patterned movement of hands and feet from a basic attitude. The cadence illustrated in figure (1) begins with the 'mandala-sthana' and a pair of 'sikhara-hastas' held opposite the breast are gracefully spread out as 'patakas' as the foot is established in front; the second movement involving a tap and a jump restores the original attitude with which the cadence started. This is an 'adavu' familiar to the artists of the Nautch as 'ta tai tam.' In the 'nattithattadavu' (fig. 3) the first movement takes the foot forward, the next carries that foot behind the other swastika-wise, with an appropriate movement of the hands; the third movement plants the foot forward once again and the fourth restores it to the original position. The Nautch cadence 'tai tai tatha' (fig. 4) involves a lateral tilt of the body with hands to correspond on either side, completed by an energetic forward movement. All these three cadences could well be termed 'karanas,' because they fulfil all the essentials of a 'karana.' But the Nautch has forgotten quite as much as it remembers and it is in recovering the forgotten essentials that the extensive Natya literature, the intimate Natya sculpture and the authentic traditions of the art, render signal aid; even with all these aids our problem is not easy of solution because what is sought to be recovered is not the shape of this 'hasta' or that flexion, but the career of the movements in their entirety and the specific curves and contours of which they are composed.

Retaining the very floor-contacts described in the last para but substituting another movement of the hands, we

derive two entirely different cadences, glimpses of which have been seized in figures (2 & 5). Not only do they bear no resemblance to the previous 'adavus' in spite of identical floor-contacts, the two differ from each other employing identical hand movements in different directions. Likewise could we derive more cadences by varying the hand-movements and by combining them with other movements of the feet. Provisionally naming these two 'karanas' (figs. 2 & 5) 'atikranta' and 'parsvakranta,' let us endeavour to build up a section of an imaginary 'nritta' composition and begin it with the 'tribhangi-sthana' (fig. 6) and render some beautiful 'rechakas' of the neck ('addiyams' as Tamil India knows them) and pass on to the 'parsvakranta karana' (fig. 5) rendered by either hands and feet, then to the 'ardhamattalli' (see sculpture 2 of last section on 'Dance Traditions') with a few steps to the right and left, then to the 'atikranta karana' (fig. 2) on to the 'karana-unmattaka' (resembling fig. 11 of Gopinath in the last article but in a standing posture) with both the hands spread out instead of one and take some paces forward in terms of a standard floor-contact; at this point the dancer if capable could attempt the 'mayuravalitam' (peacock cadence) with its difficult involution of the leg behind in imitation of the curl of the scorpion's tail and graceful turns to the left and right: a single 'nattadvu' and a gyrating 'bhramari' leading the dancer back to the 'tribhangi-sthana' would conclude this imaginary dance-fugue in which an identical cadence of the hands is iterated through a series of ever changing floor-contacts and supported by a beautiful attitude at either end. A 'nritta' passage such as this would represent an attempt at reconstructing the classical dance, especially the 'karanas.' If after we have visualised the 'karanas' in precise and perfect detail, we attempt those sequences called 'angaharas' and the simple and composite 'pindibandhas' and the group dances, the 'rasaka' and 'hallisaka,' all based on the 'karanas,' this would represent a somewhat ambitious attempt at reconstructing the classical

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dance of India. But all these belong to the realm of research and are tardy and difficult of realisation even with the best aids and efforts. But the authentic traditions derived from the classical system offer no such problems and are the ultimate refuge of the artist. If, as demonstrated, a few changes could convert a Nautch cadence into a classical cadence and *vice versa*, it is not unreasonable to infer that tradition, far from retarding creative effort, actually helps it. By laying the foundation and imparting a knowledge of the fundamentals of the art, tradition equips the artist to tackle the mysteries of higher dance. It therefore remains the primary means of reconstructing the classical art.

To return to the Nautch. The most beautiful and captivating of the Nautch compositions is the 'alarippu'—the first item on the programme which, as stated earlier, is a dance invocation. Other than the 'trisra' and 'misra' varieties of this, two versions of the 'alarippu' have survived—one in the Devadasi tradition and the other at Soolamangalam with some differences between them. Whether or not this was the 'mukam' mentioned by *Silappadikaram* which embodied the three 'rechakas' of the neck, hip and feet, it certainly resembles the karana 'vaisakha rechitam' in the incorporation of these 'rechakas,' only they are rendered from a basic 'samapada-sthana' instead of the 'vaisakha.' Beginning with the 'samapada' attitude, the torso thrown slightly forward, shoulders relaxed and palms meeting each other overhead as though the karana 'leenum' was employed in divine adoration (fig. 11) to the accompaniment of bewitching glances and smiles and movements of the brow—a 'naivedya' of feminine graces—followed by some elegant 'addiyams' of the neck in double quick time, the hands are brought gracefully down as outspread 'patakas,' shoulder, elbow and wrist on level: follows a duet between the neck and the hands, a crisp expressive movement of the hands responding to a caressing movement of the neck, emphasised by an appropriate turn of the hip: follows a movement of the neck and hands in unison, each hand

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reaching the neighbourhood of its shoulder, describing undulating patterns of petal-like symmetry and diverted back to their original position as outspread 'patakas,' whence they return to the neighbourhood of the chest in pretty alternation, with a faint suggestion of the karana 'vaksha-swastika'; the overhead 'anjali' is rendered once over and the hands are brought down as outspread 'patakas' and in a semi-seated posture called 'motitam' (fig. 12) all the previous cadences are iterated once again seriatim; follows what resembles the karana 'swastika-rechitam' in the course of two lateral movements (fig. 13); varieties of the 'dhi ti tai' cadence are now rendered along with a forward movement, accompanied by the beautiful action of both the hands in unison and alternation; then the 'digi digi' cadence to a backward movement along with a circular 'vartana' of both the hands; the 'alarippu' ends with a third overhead 'anjali' and the outspread 'patakas' elegantly brought down, shoulder, elbow and wrist on level. A prosaic description like the above cannot convey even a fraction of the charm of this entrancing sequence, which must be seen over and over again to be enjoyed. Among the renderings of 'alarippu' during the last three or four years at Madras, that of Varalakshmi stands out in the writer's memory as the most exquisite. No wonder that the 'alarippu,' like the lotus and other choice gifts of the earth, was set apart as an offering to the Deity—a gift so irresistibly beautiful and so precious that only the gods were worthy of it!

The 'jatiswara' is a composition danced to a 'swarasahitya' in several sections: this 'sahitya' is just an incidental accompaniment and confined to the briefest compass, the real theme and essence being the dance. Beginning with a semi-seated posture, it passes on to the 'samapada-sthana' from which a semi-circular movement of the 'pataka' hand is executed with the right foot planted forward (fig. 14) and is repeated by the left hand and foot with a dainty 'addiyam' in between; follow inward evolutions of either hand leading to the 'nattithattadavu' (fig. 3) with a rhythmic

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subtlety worked in ; then the sculpturesque attitude of figure (15) with a neck movement and slight forward progress ; follow two lateral movements similar to that denoted by fig. 13 of the 'alarippu' ; then the cadence 'tai tai thatha' embodying a lateral tilt and foot planted on side (fig. 4) in either direction ; a few 'dhi ti tai' cadences conclude the first section of the 'jatiswara.' The other sections enshrine other beautiful movements of the hands and floor-contacts like the 'tattimettadavu' (fig. 16). The 'jatiswara' is the one composition of the Nautch which a mere male could render without loss of beauty.

The 'adavus' are the basis of the dance of the Nautch ; and a unit of dance called 'tirmana' is made up of a series of these strung together in the 'tala avartas.' 'Tirmana' corresponds to a decorative device in architecture and like a refrain or a musical 'sangathi' is an ever-recurring unit of dance as a prelude, an interlude and finale. Thus the 'tirmana' preludes the 'sabda,' the next item on the programme which is really a duet of 'nritta' and 'abhinaya' or rather a piece of 'abhinaya' with a fringe of 'nritta' running all around it and in between. As many of the present day misconceptions of the art are founded upon a confusion of the relationship between 'nritta' and 'abhinaya,' we may take this opportunity of defining them. 'Nritta' is the origin—'prakriti' ; 'abhinaya' is 'vikriti' something derived from 'nritta.' The one like the 'raga' is the basic resource ; the other like the 'kirtana' is a concrete application of it. The 'kirtana' therefore demands the preamble of the 'raga' and plenty of it in the form of improvisations, in between and at every pause, as a kind of frame-work and setting. As 'abhinaya' is the application of dance forms, it requires pure dance to sustain it not only from within, but also from without and all around and at every interstice. Yet there are some among us who adore 'abhinaya' but hate dance !

Its sustenance of rhythm too, 'abhinaya' derives from dance,—from the feet which keep up a continuous syllabifica-

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tion with which the significant gestures of the hand, movements of the eye and eyebrow have to coincide; to disown dance therefore is to disown rhythm. This very rhythm pervades those static attitudes,—the ‘mandala’ and ‘samapada’ *sthanas* of the Nautch and the ‘vaisakha-sthana’ of Kathakali which initiate and sustain dance and ‘abhinaya.’ These harmonies of line and balance, as we might term the ‘sthanas,’ and harmonies of line and movement, as we might call the ‘karanas’, supreme dance forms both, constitute also the supreme resources of ‘abhinaya’; to deny dance therefore is to deny ‘abhinaya.’ The Nautch does embody some of these as media of ‘abhinaya’—for instance fig. 27 which represents Krishna in the act of drinking milk which occurs in the ‘sabda’ and figure 17 which portrays the dignity and profun-
dity of the hero and is frequently employed. Other examples of such protraits are to be found in the ‘abhinaya’ of the gods. There are also the seated and recumbent ‘sthanas’ of dance for which the ‘abhinaya’ of the Nautch offers little scope but which the dramatic traditions have seized and utilised. If the Nautch had remembered all the classic attitudes and cadences and our dance masters and artists had been conversant with them all, the ‘sthanas’ and ‘karanas’ might have found more frequent employment in ‘abinaya’; but as it is, we meet with just a few of them and far between. Conversely, perfect ‘abhinaya’ is impossible without a know-
ledge and mastery of these essentials. Glimpses of a few of these forgotten essentials we have attempted to recover in figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. The ‘vaishnavasthana’ occurring as a phase of the karana ‘katisama’ (fig. 7) and the ‘tribhangi-sthana’ (fig. 6) could well denote the gods—especially Krishna, and by varying the ‘mudras’ we could depict his various ‘lilas.’ The karana ‘vyamsita’ (fig. 9) could find employment in the portraiture of Hanuman. The ‘karihasta’ cadence attempted in figure 8 could be a dance portrait of Dance. The ‘alapallava-soochi’ (fig. 10) could be effectively employed in the ‘abhinaya’ of wonder. These very cadences, with others suitably strung together, would form

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a sequence of pure dance of the classical type. Let it not be forgotten however that to enrich dance in the manner indicated, is one thing, and to reform it, quite another.

The next item 'varna' is the most elaborate composition of the Nautch. In structure it does not differ very much from the 'varna' of music, though the music, in common with other 'sahityas' of the Nautch, is superior. Here again is a preliminary 'tirmana' and 'tirmanas' between one section and another. The 'tirmanas' of the 'varna' are ampler and possess considerable elements of beauty, embodying as they do some of the most beautiful cadences of hands and feet (figs. 1, 16 & 19) The 'abhinaya' also is more minute and detailed, and the balance between 'nritta' and 'nritya' is perfectly maintained except in the 'charana' section where there is a release into 'nritta' phantasies embodying a great variety of foot-movements and rhythmic variations—a sudden flood of 'nritta' overwhelming the tide of 'abhinaya'—rather Dance which had been enchain'd to sense and given the lowly office of interpretation, breaking free of the bondage and setting the pace for Music, while Music is content to meekly follow from a distance. This 'nritta' crescendo for which the 'sahitya' passage is just an afterthought is the most beautiful part of the 'varna.' If the modern reformer would un-sex 'lasya' and make it accommodate themes he considers appropriate, here also he finds the 'nritta' superfluous and best lopped off. Did not the late Dr. Vincent Smith think the beautiful forearm—the 'karihasta'—of the Nataraja superfluous and recommend its amputation?

"Tillana" brings us to the end of the dance programme of the Nautch. Barring the 'alarippu,' this is the most captivating item of pure dance, not sensuous by any means, but infinitely æsthetic and one that should be awaited in pleasant anticipation. The early sections of it resemble the 'jatiswara' very much in the 'griva' and 'kati'—'rechakas' and the sculpturesque forward movements (fig. 15); suddenly the structure changes and a few simple cadences epitomise all the queenly majesty of woman, all her airs and graces, glances

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and turns of head in a most vivid and intriguing manner; one moment she is gracious and smiling; suddenly she turns away in exquisite caprice vouchsafing the vision of her barest profile to reappear under guise of an entirely different mood (fig. 22); and like a musical artist who alternately conceals and reveals the 'raga' in rendering the 'tana,' she places the forefinger of a 'soochi' hand on cheek roguishly in terms of the 'gandasoochi-karana' (fig. 25) and beats a slow retreat concealing and revealing her face as she moves along; in an access of playfulness she returns again and permits a vision of her half-averted face in a framework of uplifted and interlocked 'nritta-hastas' (fig. 23); in sheer delight she lifts one foot and darts a hand across in hasty recollection of the karana 'valitam' (fig. 26); now she plays a whimsical male role in executing the karana 'parsvajanu.' If the visible arts of painting and sculpture based themselves on Natya and drew their sustenance of true rhythm from its 'sthanas,' the 'tillana' provides an instance of Dance borrowing the 'sthanas' of Painting—the full, half and three-quarter views for its own ends. 'Kinjin' corresponds to the 'tillana' in the Southern dramatic tradition; and it is said of Sitarama Bhagavatar of Soolamangalam, an expert in feminine dance and a consummate master of the art of revelation in concealment, that hundreds of professional dancing girls would hasten to witness his renderings to learn therefrom. And the story teller adds that this super-artist had the highest admiration for the art of Ammalu of Pudukkottah. What a marvel of marvels this Ammalu must have been!

The 'modi' introduces the woman character in Therukkoorthu. Beginning with a courtesy to the audience in terms of the karana 'leenum' rendered in several directions, palms meeting each other opposite the breast, it passes on to the semi-seated posture 'motitam' from which it derives its name; a semi-acrobatic movement imposing considerable strain on the hip is now rendered with the hands interlocked overhead (fig. 18) passing on to two kinds of lateral movements with hands on hip (fig. 21 & 24); these movements occur in

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the 'tillana' from a standing posture and in the 'jatiswara' with a hand accompaniment (fig. 14). Then follow movements curiously reminiscent of the karanas 'kunchitam' and 'chakramandalam.' The dancer gets up now and iterates some of these movements from a standing posture; the 'modi' concludes with a variety of the parivritta karana' (fig. 23) and the 'gandasoochi' (fig. 25) and a 'tirmana' finale.

In 'abhinaya,' 'motitam' denoted the sweet reluctance of woman—one of the meanings of the Tamil word 'modi.' From the acrobatic bend the Tamil word 'modi' derived another sense. Tamil is indebted to dance for the word 'oyyaram' from the 'oyarakam' that denoted the oblique lowering of the head (fig. 20)—one of the 'desi-lasyangas' of Sarangadeva. These 'lasyangas' occur in other compositions of the Nautch, but principally in the 'tillana'; also in the 'kinjin' and 'modi' of the dramatic traditions. The karanas 'parivrittam' and 'gandasoochi' are shared by most South Indian systems.

The 'Therukoothu' is responsible for the division of 'adavus' into masculine and feminine in realistaion of the truth that if Art could transform a simple rustic into a hero, it could likewise change him into a woman. The aim of art was not simple Truth, but complex Beauty; not imitative realism—'lokadharmi'—but imaginitive transfiguration—'natyadharmi.' Similarly there is an art motive in the Nautch dress which is common to both the sexes—a feature shared by most South Indian traditions. By completely draping the female figure it excludes the remotest suggestion of the lewd; at the same time it impersonalises woman in some measure, so that a male artist could compete with her on terms of equality and even excel her as Sitarama Bhagavatar did in spite of his obvious natural disadvantages.

'All the more tragic it is, the very tragedy of irony, that this dance, the one really Indian art that remains, has been, by some curious perversion of reasoning, made the special object of attack.' So wrote an European admirer of the

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Nautch years ago when there was only the social reformer to reckon with. The variety of reformers we have to reckon with today is legion : reformers of the dan e, reformers of 'abinaya,' reformers of music, reformers of dress and jewellery, reformers of the chorus, reformers of the stage and reformers who want to play colored light on the danseuse—every conceivable type of these has endeavoured to teach the art its needs. The writer ventures to express that, first and foremost, the art of the Nautch needs to be understood ; it certainly needs no defence or apology ; the supreme need at present is to leave the art free to seek its fulfilment in Bharata undeterred by the importunities of Reform. And to those who feel that the Nautch consists of dead forms, the only answer is, in the words of a famous wit, that where lovers of Beauty catch an effect, there are others who catch a cold !

Indian Writers of English Verse

By BURRA V. SUBRAHMANYAM, B.A. (HONS.)

To those interested in the cultural renaissance of India, there are few subjects more fascinating than the study of Indian poets who have sought to express themselves in the English language. Ever since we had the privilege of belonging undoubtedly to the British Empire, mastery of the English language and craftsmanship therein have been the alluring aim of all education. Shakespeare defeated Kalidasa. And the lesser lights of Vernacular literatures became altogether dimmed. It was in the natural sequence of events that some of the people who learnt English should dabble in English versification and that some of those who so dabbled should achieve a certain distinction in that field. But, even so, the insignificant ratio of those Indians who could write tolerable English verse to the vast bulk of their educated countrymen is a significant fact. And more significant is the fact that even those who achieved some success did not achieve it in such a measure as to take by storm the entire world of English letters. Miss Toru Dutt in the last century and Mrs. Naidu in this have compelled some critics of the West to take notice of them. And Edmund Gosse and Arthur Symons were not men who could be too easily provoked to welcome and encourage writers without promise. Yet he were a bold man indeed who would maintain that any Indian ever wrote a poem in English which could stand comparison with what is first-rate in English poetry—say, with Wordsworth's 'Ode on Immortality' or Shelley's 'Skylark' or even Tennyson's 'Lotos-eaters.'

R. C. Dutt, one of the earliest among Indians to master English prosody, writes in his preface to 'Lays of Ancient India,' a translation of Indian legends into English verse: 'I cannot help feeling my own unfitness for undertaking

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such a task in a language which is not my mother tongue.' And this diffidence, we must remember, for almost a mere translation ! The foreign-ness of the medium of expression should naturally be felt to a greater extent by those attempting original English verse. This is evident not merely from the style and metre of versifiers who failed to make a name, but also from the poetry of comparatively better artists in English verse like Manmohan Ghose, Toru Dutt and Mrs. Naidu. It is not the purpose of this article to prove or indicate that, had these artists adopted their own mother tongues, they would have written finer poetry. The reverse may actually be true in some cases. We merely concern ourselves here with illustrating the dangers and difficulties of adopting a foreign language as the literary medium.

PROSODY

The initial difficulty is the mastery of English prosody. But prosody is not a synonym for poetry. As against but one Toru Dutt there are many of her countrymen who could write verse that rhymes and scans perfectly and who are yet deservedly unknown ; whereas she, who could perpetrate many a technical blunder in versification, wrote some very remarkable poems. Mr. E. J. Thompson carries this point even into a comparison of the relative merits of Toru Dutt and Mrs.Naidu. 'It is natural,' he says, 'to think of Sarojini Naidu when Toru Dutt comes to mind. It is undeniable that Mrs.Naidu has a metrical accomplishment and a skill in words, far beyond anything which her predecessor's hasty effort attained. But in strength and greatness of intellect the comparison is all to Toru's advantage.'

COMMAND OF LANGUAGE ETC.

The second difficulty is with regard to the vocabulary of verse or what we might call 'poetic diction,' borrowing the expression from the famous controversy of the Romantic Revival. An Indian learns the English language by reading it and not by speaking it. Although every one of us rapidly

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acquires the subtleties of English slang, an Indian is rarely able to make his own the simplicity of the pure English language which, more than anything else, is necessary for the purpose of writing good English verse. It is, of course, a little different if the artist has lived in England for a considerable time and spoken the language for many years with the natives of England. But it appears as if that difficulty reappears even to such an artist, once he has left England and crossed the Channel. Manmohan Ghose, brother of Sri Aurobindo, went to England before he was ten and returned to India as a young man many years later. Careful students of his verse published as 'Songs of Love and Death' can find a certain difference in style between the verses he wrote in England and those he wrote later in India. Some of his verses about Myvanwy (obviously an English girl who meant England to him) written in the earlier period appeal to us not merely by their tenderness of sentiment but also by their simple charm of diction. In 'Home Thoughts' he writes, addressing his own country :

' My soul may travel to you, but the sea
Sternly puts back the pilgrim feet of life
With the harsh warning of necessity—'

Again, in a verse called 'Myvanwy' occurs this passage recollecting his native land :

' Lost is that country and all but forgotten
Mid these chill breezes, yet still, oh, believe me
All her meridian suns and ardent summers
Burn in my bosom.'

Compare the simplicity and the perfect rhythm of those lines with what is perhaps an extreme example of his later style. In a verse called 'The Rider on the White Horse' which occurs in his 'Orphic Mysteries' we find the following lines :

' His hat was mystery
His cloak was history ;
Pluto's consistory

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Or Charon's shallop
Could not the dusky hue
Of his robe match.'

This almost sounds like the later Browning without Browning's 'thoughts hardly to be pack'd into a narrow act.'

Toru Dutt and Mrs. Naidu do not suffer in such a measure from this disability of diction. Edmund Gosse may write of the former that 'the English verse is sometimes exquisite; at other times the rules of our prosody are absolutely ignored, and it is obvious that the Hindu poetess was chanting to herself a music that is discord to an English ear.' Even he cannot find fault with her language. Her 'Ballads of Hindustan,' in spite of the enthusiasm of Gosse, are comparatively pedestrian in their style and progress. They are almost 'round unvarnished tales.' But, as Mr. Thompson carefully points out, 'the half-dozen intensely personal poems which follow the Ballads' are of higher poetic value and contain some memorable lines. The sonnet 'Baugmaree' might have been written by Keats. Some of the lines are actually reminiscent of Keats. The ending,

'One might swoon
Drunken with beauty then or gaze and gaze
On a primeval Eden in amaze.'

reads like a happy blending of the 'Sonnet on Chapman's Homer' (with stout Cortez staring) and the sonnet of 'Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art' that ends in a wish to 'swoon to death.' But this suggestion apart, the sonnet as a whole is remarkably alive with poetic reality. Wordsworth might have written the following lines, or Keats, or Tennyson—but the fact remains that Toru Dutt wrote them :

'The light-green graceful tamarinds abound
Amid the mangoe-clumps of green profound
And palms arise like pillars gray, between,
And o'er the quiet pools the seemuls lean
Red,—red, and startling like a trumpet's sound.

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Her sonnet on the 'Lotus' is a beautiful idea executed in beautiful language. And her poem 'The Casuarina Tree,' which, in spite of all its inequalities, Mr. Thompson justly considers 'the most remarkable poem ever written in English by a foreigner,' has some lines (apart from the short quotation in it) which only an inspired Wordsworth could have written, and other lines recording personal sentiment eternally stamped with the sweet personality of Toru Dutt :

' But not because of its magnificence
Dear is the Casuarina to my soul.
Beneath it we have played ; though years may roll,
O sweet companions, loved with love intense,
For your sakes shall the tree be ever dear !
Blent with your images, it shall arise
In memory, till the hot tears blind mine eyes ! '

But even Toru Dutt's poetic command of the English language was actually limited. This is obvious when we remember that only when her personal emotion was intense could she write memorable verse—verse, even so, more memorable for genuineness of emotion than for beauty of expression. The greatest difficulty is always, of course, to feel intensely and not conventionally in a foreign language. Intense personal emotion when sincere and not sentimental is, however, sometimes capable in a great artist of over-riding natural difficulties of language, and of presenting itself in the simplest and most appealing garb even in a foreign tongue. One knows that the reminiscent mood in 'Our Casuarina Tree' and in 'Near Hastings' gives a solemn dignity to the poems. But the straightforward lyric describing one's own emotions is not the entire field of poetry. If no other forms of poetry existed, we could not have had Browning and Tennyson and Milton and Shakespeare in their most characteristic forms. Poetry is more than one's own reminiscences. Milton's 'Paradise Lost' and Shakespeare's 'Lear' are poetry without being personal lyrics. Browning's 'Abt Vogler' and Tennyson's 'Ulysses'

are not the reminiscences of the poets themselves. Toru Dutt's poetic domain did not extend so far. Hers was not such a complete command of the English language that she could write verse remarkable in bulk for sheer beauty of expression or sheer forcefulness of exposition. And even within her own domain of personal feelings, she left behind only a few poems. These facts may be attributed by some to temperamental incapacity or premature death; but it is almost certain that, if Toru Dutt with all her poetic sensibility had been born an English woman, she would naturally have had enough command of language to leave behind a greater variety of poems and a greater number of them.

Mrs. Naidu's command of the English language is however of a different order. She is always perfect in her command of it because she never attempted anything beyond the limited range of her poetic ability. Speaking of verses which Sarojini Chattopadhyay (as she then was) gave him, Edmund Gosse writes : 'The verses which Sarojini had entrusted to me were skilful in form, correct in grammar, and blameless in sentiment, but they had the disadvantage of being totally without individuality. They were Western in feeling and imagery; they were founded on the reminiscences of Tennyson and Shelley; I am not sure that they did not even breathe an atmosphere of Christian resignation. I laid them down in despair.' He proceeds : 'I advised the consignment of all that she had written in this falsely English vein to the wastepaper basket. . . . I entreated her to write no more about robins and skylarks in a landscape of our Midland counties, with the village bells somewhere in the distance calling the parishioners to church, but to describe the flowers, the fruits, the trees, to set her poems firmly among the mountains, the gardens, the temples, to introduce to us the vivid populations of her own voluptuous and unfamiliar province; in other words, to be a genuine Indian poet of the Deccan, not a clever machine-made imitator of English classics.' Very truly are even the published poems of Mrs. Naidu 'skilful in form, correct in grammar and blame-

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less in sentiment.' But it appears to us, with all due respect to her, that her poems are still devoid of individuality. They are no longer about 'robins and skylarks in a landscape of our Midland counties.' Instead we have the whole paraphernalia of Indian flowers and Indian birds and Indian scenes in poems which are either descriptive songs or conventional lyrics. When she writes the 'Song of the Palanquin-bearers,'

'Lightly, oh lightly we bear her along,'

or when she describes Devadasis,

'Eyes ravished with rapture celestially panting,
what passionate bosoms aflaming with fire,'

it is an Indian subject with perfect metre and clear good sense,—but one fails to understand what compelling inner urge made her write these verses. Sometimes she gives the impression of deliberately sitting down to write a poem, whether it be about her four children, or about a cry she heard in the streets, or of a theme equally un-spontaneous. Take the verse, 'Alabaster,' in her *Golden Threshold*:

'Like this alabaster box whose art
Is frail as a cassia-flower, is my heart,
Carven with delicate dreams and wrought
With many a subtle and exquisite thought.'

'Therein I treasure the spice and scent
Of rich and passionate memories blent
Like odours of cinnamon sandal and clove,
Of song and sorrow and life and love.'

Only some one very keen at the moment on writing something or other in verse could have found inspiration in that alabaster box.

Her descriptions are usually superficial and her sentiments are almost always commonplace. When for instance we read the lines in 'Solitude' (*The Bird of Time*),

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' To the glens, to the glades, where the magical darkness is
flowing
In rivers of gold from the breast of a radiant cloud,'

or,

' Through the luminous hours ere the lotus of dawn shall
reblossom
In petals of splendour to worship the lord of the world,'

we have the exuberance of words like 'glen' and 'glade' and 'darkness' and 'river' and 'cloud' and 'dawn' and 'lotus' and 'petals' without the lines conveying any steady picture to our imaginations. It is the same tale again in her 'Song of a Dream' (*The Bird of Time*),

' Lone in the light of that magical grove
I felt the stars of the spirits of Love
Gather and gleam round my delicate youth
And I heard the song of the spirits of Truth ;
To quench my longing I bent me low
By the streams of the spirits of Peace that flow
In that magical wood in the land of sleep.'

There are Love and Truth and Peace with capital letters, but the whole picture of it is more vague and more superficial than even a dream need be.

And a great many of her poems have for their theme the conventional sadness of adolescence and immaturity. Joseph Auslander in an American edition of her poems talks of 'a certain strange feverishness of texture in her poetry,' and says, 'Her poems flush. We touch heat.' What we actually touch is this conventional sadness. She sometimes succeeds in giving to such vague and pointless grief a beautiful form in words and music. Lilavati's lament in 'Vasant-Panchami' is thus :

' For my sad life is doomed to be, alas,
Ruined and sere like sorrow-trodden grass,
My heart hath grown, plucked by the wind of grief,
Akin to fallen flower and faded leaf,

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Akin to every lone and withered thing
That hath foregone the kisses of the spring.'

These lines are as beautiful as any in Pope's 'Heloise to Abelard,' but not as full of feeling as Lear's lament over Cordelia's corpse. Sometimes her sadness is just a pretty idea and goes no deeper than that,—as in 'Caprice.'

' You held a wild flower in your finger-tips
Idly you pressed it to indifferent lips
Idly you tore its crimson leaves apart.....
Alas it was my heart.

' You held a wine cup in your finger-tips
Lightly you raised it to indifferent lips
Lightly you drank and flung away the bowl.....
Alas it was my soul.'

The difficulty is always to find evidence in her verses that a sentiment has been felt by her and not been just thought out. When she sings in a verse called 'In the Forest,'

' We are weary, my heart, we are weary, so long we have borne
The heavy loved burden of dreams that are dead, let us rest,
Let us scatter their ashes away, for a while let us mourn ;
We will rest, O my heart, till the shadows are gray in the West,'

or when she throws 'A Challenge to Fate' in the lines,

' Though you deny the hope of all my being,
Betray my love, my sweetest dream destroy,
Yet will I slake my individual sorrow
At the deep source of Universal joy—
O Fate, in vain you hanker to control
My frail serene indomitable soul,'

one feels that ninety-nine out of every hundred who had ever attempted versification in any language must (in their years of apprenticeship) have put in words the self-same

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sentiment, and that Mrs. Naidu has not risen above them. The 'weary heart' and 'the frail serene indomitable soul' are a common trick of trade in the early career of every poet. But Mrs. Naidu unfortunately never seems to have progressed beyond that stage.

There is also in Mrs. Naidu's poetry an architectural quality, an excess of balance not merely in form but in thought. She decides to write a poem on 'Bells' and she arranges beforehand that there will be three stanzas, one on anklet-bells, another on cattle-bells, and a third on temple-bells. She wants 'Suttee' to be the subject of another poem and having in mind, to start with (as one might conjecture), the last lines of three contemplated stanzas :

‘Love, must I dwell in the living dark ?’
‘Shall the blossom live when the tree is dead ?’
‘Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone ?’

she spins out the rest of each stanza. The same quality is prominent in most of her other poems such as 'The Illusion of Love,' 'Street Cries,' 'Harvest Hymn,' 'Caprice,' and 'Indian Weavers.' The truest form of poetry grows like a tree and cannot be built like a house. Such thoroughly premeditated balance robs Mrs. Naidu's verse of the impression of spontaneity. The balance is too obvious. The architecture is too apparent. Michael Angelo could never paint a picture without importing into it the quality of his own especial art, the immobility of the sculptor's work. The figures of his paintings lack a potential sense of movement and life. He painted, so to speak, out of sculpture. And therefore Raphael is infinitely the better artist on canvas. The rigidity of sculpture and architecture is as foreign to poetry as to painting. And it is in this manner that Mrs. Naidu, like many immature poets, has sinned most.

Mrs. Naidu's command of English prosody and poetic diction (which is in itself a great achievement) need not therefore be mistaken for more than what it is. Her individuality as a poet is not great. She never attempted themes

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that baffle bigger poets. On a frail raft she was content to remain very near the coast of conventional sentiment. She never ventured far into the sea. And therefore her raft never failed her. Her perfection of form is admirable, for she alone achieved it so well when Toru Dutt failed. But her large output of verse compared to Toru Dutt's is not so creditable as the finer quality of Toru Dutt's half dozen personal poems. And this proves that there is something radically incomplete or imperfect about Mrs. Naidu's otherwise admirable command of the English language. We said before that, had English been her mother tongue, Toru Dutt would have written a greater variety of poems and a greater number of them. Had English been Mrs. Naidu's real mother-tongue the quality of her poetry would have gained in genuineness of thought and sentiment.

CHOICE OF A THEME

Thirdly, command of language was not however the greatest difficulty that confronted these Indian writers of English verse. The choice of a theme seems to have baffled the best among them. There is a certain natural incongruity about the treatment of an Indian theme in English verse. It is hard to rise to the full stature of the theme in a language unused to the sentiments of such a theme. Each language of the world has a genius of its own and rests firmly on traditions that may not easily be defied. No translation of Goethe's *Faust* reads like genuine Goethe because the spirit of Faust is in some manner wedded to the German language. We are told that Tagore's poems are even more beautiful in their native garb than in translation. Shakespeare can never be translated into any Indian language and yet remain Shakespeare. It is at least as difficult to put an Indian theme into English verse as to translate Shakespeare and Goethe into an Indian language. And yet Indian writers of English verse at one stage or other feel the necessity of attempting an Indian theme. Something perhaps warns them that at least the theme must be Indian! Toru Dutt, immediately on

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her return to India, 'began to study Sanskrit with the same intense application which she gave to all her work—and plunged into its mysterious literature.' And she was eager to weave the legends of her own people into English verse. Mrs. Naidu, after divorcing 'robins and skylarks in a landscape of the Midland counties' fell back on themes like 'Humayun to Zobeida (From the Urdu)', 'The song of Princess Zeb-Un Nissa in praise of her Beauty (From the Persian)', 'To Buddha seated on a lotus,' 'Damayanti to Nala,' 'A Rajput Love-song' and 'Vasant-Panchami.' And even Manmohan Ghose 'began a drama on the story of Nala and Damayanti which was never finished.' In Lawrence Binyon's Introductory Memoir to Manmohan Ghose's 'Songs of Love and Death' we find the conflict most clearly stated. 'Mentally he was torn in two. I often urged him to take a theme from Indian legend and he attempted a poem on Savitri among other subjects. But it would not shape itself. He felt the need to Europeanise the atmosphere in some sort and then the essence evaporated. Thus he hovered between two hemispheres, not wholly belonging to either.'

Manmohan Ghose failed so thoroughly because he was completely out of sympathy with the spirit of his own language and the cultural heritage of his country. To the end of his life he would write poems with titles like 'Poplar, Beech and Weeping Willow' or 'Oak, Pine and Silver Birch' or 'Song of Britannia,' and was incapable of reflecting his native surroundings in verse. Toru Dutt and Mrs. Naidu were otherwise. Edmund Gosse says of Toru Dutt: 'She was pure Hindu, full of the typical qualities of her race and blood and preserving to the last her appreciation of the poetic side of her ancient religion, though faith itself in Vishnu and Siva had been cast aside with childish things and been replaced by a purer faith.' The same critic says of Mrs. Naidu: 'She springs from the very soil of India; her spirit, although it employs the English language as its vehicle, has no other tie with the West. It addresses itself to the exposition of emotions which are tropical and primitive.....If the poems

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of Sarojini Naidu be carefully and delicately studied, they will be found as luminous in lighting up the dark places of the East as any contribution of savant or historian.' Of 'tropical and primitive' emotions we do not find much evidence in Mrs. Naidu's poetry, but it is true to say that both Toru Dutt and Mrs. Naidu had a sincere appreciation of their national culture. Mrs. Naidu is at her best in some of her renderings into English of songs from the Persian or Urdu or Hindustani. One readily remembers the song of Zeb-Un-Nissa :

' When from my cheek I lift my veil
The roses turn with envy pale,
And from their pierced hearts rich with pain
Send forth their fragrance like a wail.'

Most of her Indian love-songs are not however equally happy. Some of them may appeal to Englishmen as typically Indian merely because they are somewhat typically un-English, but the truth is that they are not masterpieces of Indian sentiment. She sings in 'A Pilgrimage of Love,'

' If you call me I will come
Swifter, O my love,
Than a trembling forest deer
Or a panting dove,
Swifter than a snake that flies
To the charmer's thrall.....
If you call me I will come
Fearless what befall.'

Elsewhere in the poem 'Devotion,' she sings,

' Strangle my soul and fling it into the fire.....
Why should my true love falter or fear or rebel ?
Love, I am yours to lie in your breast like a flower,
Or burn like a weed for your sake in the flame of Hell.'

As far as we could sift out these were some of the most 'tropical and primitive' emotions to be found in Mrs. Naidu's poems. But they are surely not enough to justify the remark that 'she springs from the very soil of

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India.' This utter womanly self-abandonment to the impulse and the object of her love is not purely a typical Indian sentiment. One would think that Sappho never lived and wrote, and that Mrs. Browning with all her 'Sonnets from the Portuguese' was but a myth! There is a certain exuberance of imagery if not extravagance of imagination in some of Mrs. Naidu's love songs which unwary foreigners might easily mistake for the essence of tropical Indian poetic thought. Take this example :

She :

Like a serpent to the calling voice of flutes
Glides my heart into thy fingers, O my love,
Where the night-wind, like a lover, leans above
. His jasmine gardens and sirisha-bowers ;
And on ripe boughs of many-coloured fruits
Bright parrots cluster like vermillion flowers.

He :

Like the perfume in the petals of a rose
Hides my heart within thy bosom, O my love !
Like a garland, like a jewel, like a dove
That hangs its nest in the Asoka tree.
Lie still, O, love, until the morning sows
Her tents of gold on fields of ivory.

Actually the whole poem is too pointless and confusing to be a complete expression of love in any climate. And love poetry in the languages of the Orient has qualities of directness and precision which are wanting in the poems of Mrs. Naidu. She has not been successful in making articulate anything typically Indian in so convincing a manner as to feel justified for having used a foreign medium.

When we return to Toru Dutt we find that in a characteristic manner Edmund Gosse prefers her 'Ballads of Hindustan,' and pronounces them her 'chief legacy to posterity.' Commenting on some of her stories (in verse) from the *Vishnu Purana* he says : 'In these we see Toru no longer attempting vainly though heroically to compete with

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European literature on its own ground but turning to the legends of her own race and country for inspiration. No modern Oriental has given us so strange an insight into the conscience of the Asiatic as is presented in the stories of 'Prehlad' and 'Savitri' or so quaint a piece of religious fancy as the ballad of 'Jogadhya Uma.' It is obvious at a glance that Gosse is in raptures not over Toru Dutt's poetry but over the stories of 'Prehlad' and 'Savitri' and 'Uma' and over the sentiments as old as India which these stories reveal. His appreciation of the poet is almost merely his gratitude to her for her having presented those sentiments in his own language in a simple and direct manner. He has no special praise for her style or treatment beyond mentioning a certain 'Vedic simplicity.' And this is natural in a Western critic who till then is mostly unfamiliar with Eastern mythology. He frankly maintains (to begin with) that any competition with 'European literature on its own ground' is absolutely futile. And he considers that the greatest good a Toru Dutt can do is to enlighten him and his countrymen about the ancient legends of India. He is pleased with her because she is doing something so extremely useful. His advice to Mrs. Naidu which she acknowledged as guiding her to her 'Golden Threshold' was given in the same spirit. He was anxious to avail himself of an opportunity to know more about India. 'From a young Indian of extreme sensibility who had mastered not merely the language but the prosody of the West, *what we wished* (italics ours) was, not a rechauffe of Anglo-Saxon sentiment in an Anglo-Saxon setting, but some revelation of the heart of India, some sincere penetrating analysis of native passion, of principles of antique religion and of such mysterious intimations as stirred the soul of the East long before the West had begun to dream that it had a soul.' The 'what we wished' of the quotation sounds very much like ordering a special dish in a restaurant. For it is nothing short of ordering a poet as to what she is to give to her public, and this militates against our fundamental conception of how great poetry comes to be

written. The incongruity of the situation in this case is to be traced not, however, to the artistic insensibility of the critic but to the unfortunate combination of an Eastern poet and a Western medium.

Mr. E. J. Thompson, having been in India for a great many years and not having had to read Toru Dutt in order to understand the legends of the Hindus, disagrees with Gosse about the merits of the 'Ballads of Hindustan.' 'The facts remain,' he maintains, 'of carelessness, and what is more serious, lack of sympathy in the author. She stands outside her themes and does not enter deeply into them. Nor can I consider those themes as of anything like first-class value. Some have a rustic charm which strikes the mind pleasantly enough, but not deeply.' And this is also how her 'Ballads' strike her readers who are Indians and who have known Prehlad and Savitri and Uma ever since their inarticulate childhood. The literary merits of her 'Ballads' are little more than the merits of Romesh Chunder Dutt's 'Lays of Ancient India.' They have nothing specially commendable about them. They are certainly inferior in poetic value to the few intensely personal poems that she wrote. And the Indian-ness of her themes did not save her 'Ballads' from being just ordinary.

To sum up a rather discursive article :—There is danger at every turn in the use of a foreign medium for poetry. It is difficult to master prosody. But, when mastered, prosody by itself is not a great achievement. It is difficult to master the language for the special purpose of versification. And even if one succeeds in mastering it, the essential strangeness of the language restricts either the bulk of verse, or the quality of verse, or, more commonly, both. This was why Toru Dutt could not write more than five or six really representative poems which in themselves lack variety. This was also why Mrs. Naidu could not achieve anything beyond exquisite verse, rather superficial description and very conventional sentiment. It appears as if one has to concentrate so much on the correct manipulation of the

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foreign medium that the subject matter of the verse suffers thereby. The medium being European there is always the temptation even with an Indian theme 'to Europeanise the atmosphere' because of the inherent relationship between any language and the life of those who speak it. And accordingly any attempted interpretation of one's self or of one's country in a foreign medium fails of its purpose. Such poetry lacks a soil to sustain itself. It is deeply rooted neither in the traditions of the East nor in the habitual thought of the West. A few unknowing Western critics may be pleased with the superficial knowledge of this country which verses in the foreign medium reveal, but it is an elementary fact that a country's heart cannot be laid bare in a language that is not the country's.

If there is to be a cultural renaissance in India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from the Indus to the Irrawaddy, the part to be played by Indians writing English verse must be forejudged as almost insignificant. Mrs. Naidu calls one of her volumes of poetry 'The Broken Wing,' and she sings,

'Behold! I rise to meet the destined spring
And scale the stars upon my broken wing.'

Verily, it is a broken wing, for the wing is a foreign literary medium. And scaling the stars seems to require a stronger means of flight.

Economic Reconstruction

By V. V. GIRI, BAR-AT-LAW

(*Member, The Legislative Assembly*)

India is pre-eminently an agricultural country. The latest census indicates that the population of India at present is about 350 millions. It has been found that 90% of the inhabitants live in villages and that 73% of the people depend for their sustenance on agriculture alone. Even the 10% that reside in the towns depend on what they secure from income from villages to make up for the deficits resulting from modern conditions, costly environments and necessities of urban life.

It is therefore conceded on all hands that unless every village and hamlet is organised on scientific lines and its resources are exploited for the benefit of the nation as a whole, there is no permanent salvation for this country. While therefore it is recognised by all sections of the people that political Swaraj is the birthright of the nation and that nothing—repression by way of ordinances, martial law or otherwise—can prevent the onward march of a nation to its legitimate goal, it is equally admitted that mere political Swaraj can mean little or nothing to the vast masses of humanity in India, unless it is followed by economic Swaraj, wherein the Government can guarantee every citizen the right to live by conceding the right to work. It was Deshbandhu Das that first clearly and in unequivocal terms stated what Swaraj meant in his famous Faridpur speech of 1923. He conceived Swaraj not merely in terms of classes but chiefly masses as well.

It is therefore right and just that with the growing consciousness of the people and the sacrifices they have made during the next ten years that followed, the foundations for real Swaraj were laid on the basis of the resolution passed at

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the Indian National Congress at Karachi. The most important of the Fundamental Rights may be mentioned here, being relevant to our purpose :—

' This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what "Swaraj," as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declares that any constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the Swaraj Government to provide, for the following :—

' Fundamental Rights according to the Congress include,

- (1) freedom of association and combination ;
- (2) freedom of speech and of press ;
- (3) equal rights and obligations to all citizens without any bar on account of sex ;
- (4) no disability to attach to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste or creed, in regard to public employment or in exercise of any trade or calling ;
- (5) equal rights to all citizens in regard to public roads, wells, schools and other places of public resort, adult suffrage, free education ;
- (6) living wage for industrial workers, limited hours of labour, healthy conditions of work, protection against economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment ;
- (7) abolition of contract labour ;
- (8) provision for maternity benefits ;
- (9) right of Labour to form Unions to protect their interests and with suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes through arbitration ;
- (10) substantial reduction in agricultural rents or revenue paid by the peasantry ;

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- (11) control over exchange and currency policy to help Indian industries and bring relief to the masses;
- (12) control by the State of key industries and ownership of mineral resources;
- (13) control of usury.'

It is clear from the preamble of the resolution that Congress places before it broad outlines of socialistic order of things to guide the future of the country. It now will be the turn of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the most trusted leader of the Congress as well as the new thought, to shape things in the proper perspective and lead the country to its legitimate goal.

He made his viewpoint quite clear in his contributions entitled 'Whither India?' His ideas on this subject are as follows :—

'But whether Socialism or Communism is the right answer or some other one, one thing is certain—that the answer must be in terms of economics and not merely politics. For, India and the world are oppressed by economic problems and there is no escaping them. So long as the fullest economic freedom does not come, there can be no freedom; whatever the political structure may be, economic freedom must of course include political freedom; that is the reality today; all else is myth and delusion.'

While there are differences of view regarding the extent the resolution on Fundamental Rights could have gone, there is no gainsaying the fact that it has laid the foundations for the 'Government of the people, for the people, by the people.' It now depends upon Congressmen, Socialists, Trade Unionists and reformers to work out the future of the country to secure for it a rightful place in the comity of nations.

In order to achieve this great purpose, mere academic discussions or mere speeches on platforms will not produce results. It can only be achieved by a persistent, consistent

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and continuous organisation of the whole rural life of the country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin in all its aspects. It does require a five or even a ten year plan of action to secure the results desired.

The work of organisation of every village must be taken up, and that immediately. For this purpose, we must find at least one good worker for every ten villages in India, the centre of a group of ten villages being made the headquarters of the person. It must be distinctly understood that the workers must go there with the object of not being temporary residents for a few days in a month or the year, but they should proceed there with the idea of permanently settling themselves and be one with the villagers in thought, word and deed.

As to the functions of such persons, they should be in a position to assure the people under their charge that they will render all possible and necessary help in educating the children of the village by starting night or day schools on the pials of the village; they should read journals and periodicals to the villagers and explain to them the political and other conditions prevailing in the country and elsewhere; they should further look to their grievances regarding water supply and other necessaries essential for the purposes of good yield from their lands. They should render every help to the villagers by not allowing them to get into the grip of money-lenders, through Co-operative Societies, Land Mortgage Banks, etc. They should further teach the villagers the essentials of sanitation, etc. They should settle disputes between villagers *in terce* and landlords and tenants.

In these days of great unemployment, it may not be difficult to find seventy thousand young men, sufficiently educated, to take up this great task if the country or the Congress can assure the workers of food and raiment. Their chief aim should be the organisation of peasants with these constructive ideas behind it. It is essential that the country's efforts must be in the direction of pooling up resources by bringing young men together in every District in India and

immediately drafting them to the villages by dividing all the villages in the District into small areas. The leaders of the Congress must go about to the group centres and tell the villagers that these workers will render every possible help in the reconstruction of the village according to the programme laid down. If the villagers are convinced about the bona fides of the workers, they will not find it difficult to feed and clothe and house one or two young men and their families in every group of villages.

The above programme, if adopted, will accomplish the ordinary propaganda in the village. But these young men should be guided by economists, practical socialists and sympathetic industrialists, who should place before the country a planned economy. There should be Economic Councils set up by the Congress in every District who should be in charge of each District and there must also be Provincial and Central Economic Councils.

The main object of these Economic Councils should be not only to place before the country a definite planned economy, but get it worked in a methodical manner. The planning otherwise becomes a meaningless effort if it is not related to some definite and pre-determined end.

The duty of these Councils should be,

1. collection of statistics of unemployed and under-employed in the country;
2. to introduce improved methods of agriculture and extension of irrigation;
3. to increase production of various manufactured articles and agricultural commodities;
4. to increase the purchasing power of the people and consequently the standard of living;
5. improving rural housing and sanitation;
6. stimulating agricultural marketing and encouraging co-operation;
7. to make India self-contained

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It is a matter for congratulation that Mahatma Gandhi started his Village Industries Association with the idea of solving the question of subsidiary income to agriculturists and peasants who have occupation only for six or eight months in the year.

His organisation resulted in the Government granting a crore of rupees for rural uplift, though half-heartedly and without a plan. It is only a greater agitation, propaganda and force of public opinion that can compel an unwilling Government to take up actually and sincerely this rural reconstruction by spending not merely one crore of rupees but at least 100 crores every year for the next five years. It should entrust the whole of this programme to the Central Economic Council fully representative of the people, by giving every help from the Government Departments concerned.

One way of solving the unemployment problem in the country is by exploiting all uncultivated but culturable land that is available. The exact statistics relating to such land are given below for the proper understanding of the question :—

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Provinces	Cultivated		Uncultivated		Forests Acres
	Net area actually sown	Current fallow	Culturable waste other than fallow	Not available for cultiva- tion	
Ajmer-Merwara	357,930	151,613	303,642	861,134	96,782
Assam	5,752,043	1,811,270	19,527,781	4,571,030	3,822,676
Bengal	23,567,900	5,300,710	5,915,644	9,152,760	4,629,540
Bihar and Orissa	24,768,100	6,214,766	6,999,999	8,017,146	7,172,964
Bombay	32,239,045	10,737,504	7,108,016	19,695,944	9,096,554
Burma	17,470,599	4,245,204	59,896,313	52,036,821	22,200,591
Central Provinces & Berar..	25,257,361	3,536,041	14,077,297	4,941,846	16,247,692
Coorg	137,793	171,547	11,690	334,045	357,185
Delhi	218,950	7,124	63,093	80,737	...
North Western Frontier Province	2,275,121	509,044	2,764,037	2,668,346	360,281
Madras	33,495,798	10,701,487	13,164,111	20,463,298	13,333,775
Punjab	27,549,514	3,221,166	14,716,694	12,721,012	1,979,286
United Provinces	35,745,770	2,468,775	10,573,860	9,913,535	9,268,577
Total	228,835,924	49,076,251	155,122,177	145,457,654	88,565,903

Note.—Statistics for Manpur Pargana have been omitted as it now forms part of Indore State.

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Area, cultivated and uncultivated, in 1931-32 in each Province

Provinces	Area according to survey	Deduct Indian States	Net Area	
			According to survey	According to village Papers
Ajmer-Merwara	1,770,921	...	1,770,921	1,770,921
Assam	+3,375,360	7,890,560	35,484,800	35,484,800
Bengal	52,044,314	3,477,760	48,566,554	48,566,554
Bihar and Orissa	71,507,695	18,334,720	53,172,975	53,172,975
Bombay	97,446,023	18,568,960	78,877,063	78,877,063
Burma	155,849,528	...	155,849,528	155,849,528
Central Provinces & Berar	85,190,400	21,207,680	63,982,720	64,060,037
Coorg	1,012,260	...	1,012,260	1,012,260
Delhi	369,904	...	369,904	369,904
Madras	91,073,424	...	91,073,424	91,158,469
North-West Frontier Province	8,578,296	140,800	8,437,496	8,576,829
Punjab	65,257,965	3,286,700	61,971,265	60,187,672
United Provinces	72,648,741	4,348,232	68,300,509	67,970,517
Total	746,124,831	77,255,412	668,869,419	667,057,529

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It is Government alone that must take direct possession of these lands and establish State Farms throughout the country and attach subsidiary industries to them. They must not only be made permanent, but remunerative, so that the State will be profited in the long run.

If, with 155,121,997 acres or nearly 2,29,000 square miles being available for the purpose as shown by statistics, and with such resources in the hands of the State, the unemployment problem could not be solved by Government, it could only be attributed to the fact that the interests of the Government are not identical with the interests of this country.

Russia by its five and ten year plans, President Roosevelt through N.R.A., Lloyd George by his New Deal, Mussolini and Hitler by their drive against unemployment, have been tackling the question of economic regeneration of their countries with sincerity and honesty of purpose that is bound to produce substantial results. An instance of what is done in America under the N. R. A. may be cited as being on all fours with the suggestions made here. The subsistence homestead movement of N. R. A. is attempting to solve the unemployment problem by a series of demonstrative projects. One phase of the programme is to assist in the re-distribution of surplus population, groups left stranded by the shut-down or permanent closing of the industries in which they earned their livelihood, and population dependent on part-time work. A second phase includes the transfer of farmers marooned in eroded and worn-out land to good land. To do this, this agency is forming new communities of garden houses which will afford a source of food supply as well as shelter.

In setting up these demonstration projects 'problem areas' are selected on the basis of local needs, suitability and value for demonstration purposes, and presence of various factors essential for the success of the plan.

Usually these homesteads will be established and administered in the groups accommodating 25 to 100 families. The individual homestead will ordinarily consist of from

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1 to 5 acres, depending upon soil, size of family, character of agricultural operations contemplated, and opportunity for wage employment. In rural reconstruction projects, the size of the individual homestead will naturally be larger and agricultural operations somewhat more extensive in scope.

All the products of the homestead farms will be for use only and none will be sold. There will thus be no increase in commercial farm products and no competition with local farmers producing for the market. For instance, the Unemployment Assistant Board which began its career on a national authority in Great Britain will have under its care 750,000 unemployed and their dependents numbering 4 million persons and will administer 55 millions a year. It will have on its staff 6,000 officials.

'Where there is a will, there is a way,' is a trite maxim. It is hoped that there will be an all-India agitation and propaganda for the purpose of accomplishing, with a five or ten year plan, the economic regeneration of this country as is done in other countries. Political and economic Swaraj will give real purchasing power to the masses of our country.

The Message of Sankara Vedanta to Our Times¹

By P. T. RAJU, M. A., SASTRI

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Indian philosophers, in spite of their great systems, have said little on social and political issues. But the present is an age of confusion in society and politics. New ideas and ideals have invaded every society and nation. The blessed isolation and ignorance in which the peoples lived for long, thinking themselves to be the most advanced and favoured nations of God on earth, are no more possible. And in some spheres of life the changes are astonishingly many and frequent. Everywhere around us there are uncertainty and apprehension. Yet the Indian has no direct help from his philosophers. Their attitude towards society and politics has only been negative, as social and political work has only instrumental, not intrinsic, value.

But still they have a metaphysical theory, a world-conception of their own. They have a standpoint from which they can view and interpret things. Many philosophers in the West, like Hegel and Plato, have applied their metaphysical theories to their conceptions of state and society. No Indian philosopher until now has made any such attempt. But at a time when we are dissatisfied with all available conceptions of society and morals, and anxiously ask for new ones, it is hoped that any formulation based on the highly developed metaphysics of India would be welcome and worth consideration. From various countries philosophers are suggesting new ways of thought and new modes of action. What follows is a suggestion that might have been offered by Sankara, had

¹ Submitted to the International Congress of Philosophy, Prague, 1984, and accepted by it.

he lived now. We have to be satisfied, for want of time, with the explication of a principle without its elaboration, and the presentation of a standpoint without any detailed description of the perspective.

I. THE METAPHYSICAL PRINCIPLE

Sankara is an Absolutist. But his Absolute is not an organic whole, an identity in difference. It is harmonious, not in the sense of the co-ordination of interrelated parts, but in the sense of the absence of disharmony. It is not relational, but transcends every relation. Sankara does not believe that the finite individuals, so long as they remain finite, can live in the Absolute without any clash. Writes Hegel : 'In the notion the elements distinguished are without more ado at the same time declared to be identical with one another and with the whole, and the specific character of each is a free being of the whole notion.'¹ But Sankara would say that if the elements in the notion are identical with one another and with the whole, there could be no principle of differentiation between them. Without differentiation, the category of plurality would be inapplicable to the Absolute. Hence the Absolute should be regarded as non-dualistic, not as a system of finite individuals.

From the absence of the principle of differentiation it follows that negativity or the principle of negation does not persist in Sankara's Absolute. Yet Sankara goes beyond the Hegelian Absolutists and says not merely that negation implies affirmation, but also that it can be affirmation. His *Ajnana*, which is translated by the words Ignorance and Nescience, which only inadequately express its significance, is not at all a negative concept, but a positive one.² It is *bhavarupa* not *abhavarupa*. Similarly, the negation of finitude in which lies the salvation of every finite being, is not utter void, but the Absolute itself.

¹ Wallace: *The Logic of Hegel*. P. 289.

² *Sarvadarsanasangraha*. P. 164.

One important point which marks off Sankara from many Hegelian Absolutists is his emphasis on intuition. The Absolute is not an object of thought, but of *akhandajnana* or integral experience. In it the difference between subject and object, and subject and predicate, disappears. Yet it is not of the nature of sensuous feeling, to which the word intuition is generally applied, because the Absolute is fully conscious of itself, wholly transparent to itself. It is intuition in the sense of *akhandajnana*, that is, experience which is integral and undifferentiated. Conceptual thought is always discursive. It tries to understand the whole as a synthesis of parts. But, as Bergson points out, the nature of an individual can not be exhausted by any amount of conceptual determinations. Even Prof. Whitehead, in explaining his infinite abstractive hierarchy, admits 'that it is impossible to complete the description of an actual occasion by means of concepts.'¹ The failure of thought, therefore, to understand the whole is inevitable. A living unity can only be intuited. We know what life is, we intuit it. But thought understands it as a peculiar synthesis of physical parts, and thus interprets the higher in terms of the lower. The Hegelian idealists claim to have always shunned this method of explanation. But it is quite plain that when, for instance, Bosanquet interprets mind as a focus of externality,² he is violating this idealistic principle. Similarly, Prof. Whitehead's conception of the whole as a concretion of elements involves the same difficulty. Hence Bergson's view, that the individuality of anything can be grasped only through intuition, cannot be gainsaid. But while Bergson's intuition is a kind of irrational will-force, Sankara asserts that the intuition of the Absolute contains no element of irrationality. The Absolute is *chidrupa*, of the nature of consciousness.

Sankara holds with Bradley the view that thought is relational. Even Kant's reason, which is speculative and points to the three Ideas beyond the empirical world, is, for

¹ *Science and the Modern World*. P. 211. cp. *Adventures of Ideas*. P. 226. 'The basis of experience is emotional.' Also see P. 326.

² *Principle of Individuality and Value*, P. 198.

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that reason, relational. Though it points to them, it can not have a comprehensive grasp of them. Sankara holds that the function of reason is negative with regard to truth. But he would add that reason not only censors but, as a consequence, drives the mind towards something less false. The view obviously follows from the Vedantic theory that cognition is *svatah pramanya* and *paratah apramanya*, that is, that the truth of a cognition is known and constituted by itself, whereas its falsehood by another. Thought cannot determine positively what truth is, but only negatively what truth is not. Its function lies in checking the aberrations of human intuitions, which are generally impure, due to their being mixed up with desires, volitions, and other states of an unbalanced mind. It is a mistake of most of the upholders of the coherence theory of truth to think that reason¹ is constitutive of truth. But Bradley, who belongs to their own camp, has pointed out that thought, if it remains relational, cannot constitute truth, and, if, on the other hand, it becomes non-relational, it ceases to be thought.² That is why he points to feeling, though unfortunately the sensuous,² as the clue to the understanding of the nature of the Absolute. The same is the case with every individuality, because thought works with conceptual determinations which can never exhaust the nature of an individual. And truth, whether the Absolute or the finite, is individuality. Yet the falsity of an intuitive grasp is determined by thought. If an intuition is the wrong one, it would be contradicted by another. The work of relating and examining whether there is any contradiction belongs to thought. Thus though the relational consciousness cannot positively determine the right intuition by exhibiting non-contradiction between the various aspects of a whole, as

¹ *Appearance and Reality*, PP. 168-172

² Sankara's intuition of the Absolute is not undeveloped thought but its completion. Psychologically, in the history of an individual's consciousness, it is true, feeling precedes thought. But logically, the integrality of the Absolute is the presupposition as well as the ideal of objective thought. This integrality, Sankara asserts, is grasped through a higher intuition which is not feeling. Feeling contains the element of irrationality which is not found in the higher intuition.

well as between one whole and other wholes,—because they are all infinite in number—yet it is by it that an intuition can be falsified.

For Sankara, as it is for the other Absolutists, the salvation of the particular lies in the realisation of the universal. This is accomplished by the negation of particularity by the particular. But this negation does not mean for Sankara, as it does for the Hegelians, leading a harmonious existence with other particulars. He does not believe that clash can be avoided, if the particular retains its particularity. He remarks: *Bhede bhayam*, in duality there is fear, but this absolute negation of particularity does not end in utter blank or void, because, for Sankara, negation of the particular, as above stated, is the Absolute. He does not believe that there could be mere nothing—a fundamental point of difference between him and the Madhyamika Buddhists.

II. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

Modern civilisation has brought distant peoples into contact, but the motive of contact has been aggrandizement and dominance, not justice and friendship. Hence, though we have reason to rejoice at the widening of our outlook and the increase of our knowledge, we have equal reason to regret the jealousies and rivalries between peoples, for both are the result of the same contact. A nation or community is a particular. As such it has no right to dominate over other particulars. It is only the whole which includes and transcends every particular that has the right to so dominate. This phenomenon, the attempt by the particular to play the part of the whole, is the root cause of the world's unrest. It appears in the political conquest of one nation by another, in the conflict between capital and labour, between caste and caste, and creed and creed. But the particular by forgetting its proper place loses its very foothold. It owes its being to the whole. By trying to usurp the place of the whole, it sets itself over against the whole and thus alienates itself from its very being. Hence the disaster.

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The above is the aggressive particularity which is the predominant characteristic of most of the Great Powers. In social life it is found in communities and classes, which, for some reason or other, are placed in a vantage ground. But there is another kind of particularity which is seclusive. It is a trait generally found in the peoples of the East. It aims at isolation, is afraid of change and innovation, and persistently tries to be self-centred and self-sufficient. But the prerogative of self-sufficiency belongs only to the whole. This second kind of particularity is another way of playing the part of the whole, and is equally fraught with disastrous consequences. Either particular fails to realize the whole, for the whole, like Aristotle's God, is attractive and also all-comprehensive.

Hegel, according to those interpreters, like Royce, who believe that for him the state is not the Absolute, pointed out that man in his social relations begins to realise his oneness with the Absolute. And the nature of his relations with the other members of his society is determined by his conception of the Absolute. If the Absolute is conceived as an organic whole in which every part tries to retain its particularity by living in harmony with others, then society also should be regarded as a whole in which every member maintains and protects himself by living in concord with the others. Hegel, of course, does not support the theory of social contract. For him, it is only an early phase of social consciousness. The Absolute is the true individual, and every part of it has its being only so far as it is a part of the Absolute. Similarly, its representative on earth, the state or society, is more concrete than the members. The harmony of the state is, therefore, of the chief concern. Yet Hegel insists that the individual member should retain his particularity. It is this insistence that has occasioned the school of left wing Hegelians, like McTaggart, who conceived the Absolute as a mere society of selves. Here Sankara would say that, so long as it is the aim of every part to retain its particularity, it can never realise its identity with the

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Absolute. We have already shown the difficulty in Hegel's conception of the Notion in which every part is equal to every other part and to the whole. The two aims, that of retaining one's particularity and of realising one's unity with the whole, are conflicting and contradictory. At best they may give rise to a state of affairs like that in the social contract, in which the members live by mutual compromises.

The spirit of mutual compromise, of organisation by division of labour and allotment of functions, which cannot be anything better than following a mutual give and take policy, is not adequate to remove discontent from the present-day world. Allotment of functions works well in the organic world. But man is not a mere organism; he belongs to the sphere of mind. In the organic world, a leg, for instance, is a leg for ever, it cannot perform the function of an eye. But in the sphere of mind, that is, at the human level, servants have been masters, and slaves generals. Organisation, therefore, tries to place man one step lower than his proper level. But such an attempt conflicts with the real nature of things. Hence the discontent and chaos that are the features of our times. What belongs to a lower level than his is shown to man as his ideal. But, on the contrary, an ideal should be higher than what we want to achieve. The conflict in the organic world is avoided by every part performing the function proper to its place and contributing to the nourishment of others. But the point is that that part has no mind, whereas the nature of man is otherwise.

The over-intellectualisation of the West is chiefly responsible for the idea that unity among the nations of the world can be attained by organisation and mutual compromises. It began with the theory of social contract in the formation of states, then discovered that man is a social being by his very nature, and formulated the theory that society is an organism of its members. But it could not understand the full significance of the fact that man is the Universal Being in essence, the realisation of which is man's ideal. The life of this Universal Being is an integrality and individuality that

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cannot be understood as a synthesis of parts or aspects, because they are infinite in number. Moreover, in attending to the parts we lose the whole. That man is a social being is an axiom of all social sciences, and not a proposition to be understood in terms of man's transactions in society. Similarly, no counting, however long, of his transactions would exhaust the nature of his sociability. A society formed on a systematisation of a particular number of transactions would always end in discord. New situations with new complexities would appear with the advance of time, and the harmony of the society will be affected. The whole history of civilisation itself is an example.

So Sankara would urge that all the unities—society, state, international unity, the cosmos, the Absolute—are intuitions eternally present, demanding to be accepted as axioms of the corresponding sciences. They are neither the products of human intelligence, nor do they allow themselves to be resolved into an integration of elements. In this hierarchy of intuitions, we are driven by the shortcomings of the lower to the higher. The driving force in this process belongs to discursive thought. As already pointed out, its function is negative : it can only show how an intuition is false. To every finite intuition thought finds an other which effects the former's stability, and the mind is driven upwards for a more stable, and therefore, a more comprehensive one. Hence what seems organisation, which is the product of relational consciousness, is only the working of this negative function. It is of use only when the intuitive process goes astray. When it does not, what appears to be systematisation follows so long as finitude exists, but never to adequately represent the whole.

Hence Sankara would urge that our society should have an intuitive, and not intellectual, basis. Organisation can never exhaust the unity of our social nature. With the progress of thought and time, the latter would manifest new phases for which the existing organisation can find no place, and consequently collapses. And when the social unity is wrongly identified with the organisation, it also is destroyed.

Then arises the chaos and conflict of which our times furnish an instance. But if the identification is not made, the organisation which is the product of intellect may break down, but the intuitive grasp of the unity will save the situation. It is no objection to say that the disaster is due to an identification of a wrong organisation with the unity. For, reasons have already been given to show how it is impossible for any organisation to express a unity. A unity manifests itself in the past, present, and future, in differing ways. Old phases vanish, and new phases make their appearance. And at no point of time can an organisation which includes all phases be possible.

But to have such an intuitive grasp of the wider whole so long as one retains one's particularity would be like jumping out of one's skin. Hence Sankara preaches negation of particularity. The problem formulated by every nation, community, or individual, should be not how it should be able to maintain itself in the conflict with others, but how it can treat others as part of its own being. What cements one nation or party with another should be not diplomatic relations, the authors of which, in utter selfishness, aim at advantages over others, but mutual friendship and sympathy, where love that knows no bounds of particularity plays the important part. Organisation should not be given the first place, not only because of the above reasons, but also because every individual would view it from his standpoint, and as existing for himself. But the negation of particularity would result in an intuitive grasp of the wider whole. It does not end in mere nothing, for the negation of the particular, as has been already shown, *is* the whole. And the relational consciousness in all the finite levels would do its own work, that of relating the existing manifestations of the unity. But this work is of secondary importance and necessarily follows the intuitive grasp of the unity. It is somewhat similar considerations that have led thinkers like Edward Carpenter¹ to say that the future society should

¹ *Civilisation: Its cause and Cure.*

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be based on feeling, but not on intellect. But Sankara would object to sensuous feeling. He would never preach a return to nature similar to that of animal life. At this stage the particularity of the individual is not conscious of itself, and therefore a life of mere sensibility and feeling is possible. But at the human level the particularity is conscious of itself, and therefore a higher intuition which is conscious and not irrational is needed. But it is impossible for human beings to have such an intuition where their particularity is sacrificed, because for their finitude that very particularity is needed. Hence Sankara advises us to begin with the denial of particularity. No less a man than John Stuart Mill wrote: 'Those only are happy who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness ; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, followed not as a means but as itself an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find their happiness by the way.'¹ Sankara would comment on Mill's assertion, saying: 'Because the particularity is sacrificed. It is not an adjustment between two to preserve the particularity of each.'

¹ *Autobiography*; P. 77.

Painting and Natya

By C. SIVARAMAMURTHY, B.A. (HONS.)

A picture is a moment of *natya*. And *natya* is a series of pictures. Whether it is the depiction of human emotions and actions, or a representation of the frisking of animals, or a portrayal of the leaves of trees rustling in the wind, or the play of the ripples in a silvery lake, the picture is all the same a mirror of one moment of some aspect of Nature's *natya*. The *Vishnudharmottara*, one of the oldest works on painting in India, voices this opinion in the *slokas* :

Yatha nritte tatha chitre trailokyanukritis smrita|
Drishtayascha tatha bhava angopangani sarvasah|
Karascha ye maha (maya?) nritte purvokta nrupasattama|
Ta eva chitre vijneya nrittam chitram param matam |

This connection between painting and *natya* has been specially reiterated by poets in Sanskrit literature. A splendid body possessing a beautiful form and graceful gait being the essential requisite in the case of a dancer, Kalidasa gives it in the verse :

Dirghaksham saradindukanti vadanan bahu natavamsayoh
Samkshiptam nibidonatastanamurah parsve pramrishte iva|
Madhyah panimoto nitambi jaghanam padavaralanguli
Cchando nartayituryathaiva manasas slishtam tathasya vapuh|
—*Malavikagnimitra Act II. 3*

The various 'sthanas' and 'karanas' so important in *natya* are as essential in 'chitra,' wherein beauty of pose is as important as beauty of form. Ratnakara, the author of the gigantic work *Haravijaya*, speaks of this connection between 'chitra' and *natya* in the verse :

Vichitrasthanakopetah sukumarangavartanah|
Nritte chitre cha dadhatimakshiptahridayas striyah||
—XXXIII. 3

PAINTING AND NATYA

This interrelation between 'chitra' and *natyā* is best brought home to our mind by a look at practical examples like the ancient frescoes at Ajanta, Bagh and other places. A beautiful example of fresco dealing with *natyā* is to be found in the picture of the danseuse on the walls of Sri Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore, given below:



Sri Krishna in the Mahabharata

By M. KALIDASU, B.A., B.L.

Sri Krishna has been portrayed in our *Puranas* in many aspects of life. His pranks and exploits as a boy have always commanded the love of the Hindus. His life as a cowherd has had a special appeal to the peasantry and the common people. The divine music of his flute has captivated artistes for many centuries. He is the ideal lover, the beloved of men and women. The *Lord's Song* has been at once the delight, the solace and the guide of the metaphysician, the devotee and the man of action. Affectionate towards friends, sage in counsel, shrewd in his judgment of men and events, and unconquerable in battle, he is indeed a unique character.

One feels, however, that in his conception of Sri Krishna's part in the Mahabharata, Veda Vyasa has achieved a profound purpose which is not often noticed. When the clash of arms became imminent, and the combatants approached Sri Krishna for his assistance, he placed a choice before them which is arrestingly significant. 'One of you will have my armies, and the other will have me, unarmed and as a non-combatant.' Duryodhana foolishly chose the armies and Arjuna was delighted to have the guiding protection of Sri Krishna. From this incident onwards emerges clearly—what has indeed been true all along—the fact that Sri Krishna takes no direct or visible part in the events of the Mahabharata war. Even when his beloved nephew, Abhimanyu, is cruelly murdered, he does not exhibit any emotion of grief or sorrow; nor is he stirred to any action. Superficially, it looks as if the whole of the war would have gone on in the same manner, even if Sri Krishna was not present in the battle-field as Arjuna's charioteer. But if one looks a little deeper, one is struck by the fact that, unobtrusively, it is really Krishna's hand that guides not only the

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progress of the war, but also every one of its incidents. It is He that gives forewarnings of events to come. He puts courage into the faint-hearted. He counsels the plan of campaign. He resolves nice points of morality that arise on the battlefield. He decides the particular weapons to be used on critical occasions.

One can discern that it is indeed His plan that led to and culminated in the war between the Pandavas and Kauravas, though, here again, the workings of His design are hidden behind the apparently free choice of the persons concerned. If it is remembered that Sri Krishna was regarded by the author of the Mahabharata as an Incarnation of God, the inference that, in Sri Krishna's conduct throughout the Mahabharata events, Veda Vyasa was attempting to parallel God's plan in human affairs appears to be more than a mere fancy. A little thinking is enough to convince us that while apparently we, human beings, consciously determine the course of our conduct, it is really the Divine hand that guides the events that shape our lives. The circumstances of our birth, our position in society, the propitious environment that is necessary for the successful termination of any of our adventures, our instinctive likes and dislikes towards our fellows—the outpourings of genius—these and all other really determining factors in human lives, are things beyond the limited scope of human option and can only be attributed to the Divine Architect. And it looks as if the author of the Mahabharata was exhibiting in Sri Krishna's life God's ways to man.

Communion'

By PROF. M. SRI RAMAMURTI, M.A., LL.B.

(*The Maharajah's College, Vizianagaram*)

A deafening storm of praise and censure,
the birth-throes of mighty ventures,
travail,
and the terrible temptations
of a noisy following,
multitudinous as ocean-waves,
an utter wreckage of energy
in vain attempts to conquer the unconquerable,
the world's Pacific
of Vanity, and its Atlantic
of Ignorance,
pride,
and continual self-absorption,
and the blinding glory
of Success out-distancing Hope—

Such is the lot
of prophets and founders of faiths !

Oft do I rejoice and wonder
at Thy especial fondness for me
in keeping me Thy servant ever,
assigning me delightful duties
along ways perfectly smooth,
in letting me be
near Thee,
always !

Who says
that Thine is perilous employ,
that the way to Thee
is infest with demons dread ?

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I know,

not merely believe,
that Thou art the easiest approached,
dwelling,
not on impossible mountain-tops
not in close fastnesses of steel,
turreted and deep-moated,
but in the heart of all things !

Straighter than the sun-beam,
simpler than the child-heart,
Thy walks
are luminous with the light of a trillion stars !

Not for me the rigmarole of the learned,
nor the secret rites of the chosen ;
everyone that cares is Thy chosen,
Thou first and truest Democrat !

Art Thou

beringed with busy priests
dispensing pardons
to the profane crowd beneath
holding forth lucre
in eager outstretched palms ?

Straight and sure and swift
as an arrow to its mark,
flies to Thee
the eagle of my accustomed heart,
Thou indwelling Majesty !

Thoughts of Thee erase from my mind
the legendary Past
and the wild phantasmagoria
of the living Present ;
and it swings
to the great Was
before land and sea were made,

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and the green hills and valleys
and the ancient skies
and the sun and the stars,
and to the great Will Be
when all these will not be !

And we two dwell
alone, together,
sweetly discoursing
of what I cannot tell,
in a wordless tongue !

Mussolini 'at the Helm': A View¹

(Written on seeing a picture of Mussolini
'Necesse navigare non vivere')

By KRISHNA R. GURUSWAMY REDDIAR, M.A. (CAMBRIDGE)

The Superman has arrived—or something like it has happened! Mussolini deliberately, explicitly, places himself above the hierarchy in the State. That in the State there should be above one dominating personality or mind is Mussolinism. Carlyle, approvingly, might have put him in the category of heroes—'Hero in Politics.' Nietzsche might possibly have recognised the greatness of the Chief of the Fascists.

Fascism is the life force of the Italy of today and the present Fascism is identifiable with the life and personality of Benito Mussolini. Fascism is now at once the atmosphere and breath of the political life of Italy. Fascism, literally meaning union as the strength of a band of faggots, stands for the strength of a united people through recognition of the supremacy of the idea of the State.

Paradoxically, it would seem, the Hegelian idea of the State seems to have materialised in Italy in the defeat of the Prussianised, Hohenzollern Germany, in that the Mussolini idea of the unquestioned, primal supremacy of the State seems not unlike that of the Hegelian idea so much attempted in practice in Prussia, and the Hohenzollern German Empire adroitly developed by that great astute statesman Bismarck with unerring statesmanship but to end with disastrous results. And now Prussia completes the circle in Hitler, the Mussolini of Germany and Hitlerism.

The picture that one finds of Mussolini in the ship is mystically, significantly, symbolic of the commander's posi-

¹ The Author's intention is presentation, not necessarily advocacy.

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tion in the ship of State. Everywhere Fascism is the keyword for the strength of the New Italy.

Born of humble, suffering parentage, having tasted amply the bitternesses of early struggles and persecutions, been an exile in Switzerland, worked as stone-mason, having sworn by the Buddha as teacher, felt himself destitute and desolate in the world, been a political prisoner—the cruelty of the world having gnawed at his heart—Mussolini has largely realised himself in politics and through journalism, powerful writing and direct forceful speaking.

His participation in various grades of socialistic activities ended after a long period, with his break with the orthodox Socialists and Socialist Party at the question of the declaration of Italy's war-policy, when he definitely threw the weight of his personality and influence on the side of the 'Allies'—the German-Austro-Hungarian Entente having been known not to be 'real'—'Italia Irredenta' in mind and neutrality not being accepted as the most expedient for Italy.

The intuitive perception of the implied consequences, in anticipation, of a momentous world situation is characteristic of the Master Mind.

Discipline, the subordination of the will and interests of the individual or groups of individuals, voluntarily preferably, but necessarily at any cost, to the interests of the State, appears as the supreme practical idea of this conception of the mode and means of development of the people by the State. The idea is not uncommon. What is characteristic of the man is the explicit, forcefully deliberate, enunciation of it in political psychological fitness in a crucial world situation and the realisation of it as practical political ethic at a critical time of the people's, the nation's determination of development and progress.

Italy has been, perhaps by an implied suggestion of the possibility of destiny, before now the leader in ideas of National developments.

The Romans, long before, gave to the world the idea of corporate legal life. 'Civis Romanus'—'Civitas' is among the

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chief Roman legacies to the world. The XII Tables and related ideas of social, legal and State life—the laws of ‘Personae,’ of ‘Res’—are among the permanent Roman gifts.

Later, by the adoption of the Christian Religion by Constantine, Rome and Italy became the radiating centre of a new kind of life—‘Vita Nuova’—permeating throughout Europe, giving a new civilisation partly replacing and partly coalescing, with transforming phases, with the Pagan cultures.

Again after the Middle Ages, Medievalism,—Dante is so great a figure in European thought and feeling at the parting of the ways—by the Renaissance—affording also a relief from the exclusivism of Monasticism and Feudalism—placing Europe psychically in contact, with reawakened interest, with the great classics of the far long forgotten and directly inaccessible Greek and Roman civilisations and cultures, artistic, philosophic, literary, humanistic Italy gave to Europe a new life the dynamic impetus of which has continued through man changes in the development of the European peoples—the French Revolution itself with its after effects possibly a sequential effect of it.

After long lapses of time, once again, possibly Italy through Mussolini, by what appears a new practical idea of the relationship between the Individual and the State, and its ethic, through Fascism, gives a new leading idea of State life.

That Duty is above Right is fundamental in this conception. That the individual has no rights except such as the individual may get dependent on, in virtue of, and even only because of and in return for, duties—and this absolutely—this is the crux of Fascism which has showed itself, paradoxically, revolutionarily, in developing as a movement apart from the State and overtaking the existing State, by ‘voluntary compulsion’ of State surrender, which because of the practical working out of the idea may be described as more revolutionary even than the common revolutions against which it is recognised or taken to be a formidable, great force. This Hegelian?

It is said to be against the idea of the importance of the vote in politics and the State, the vote so dear a possession as conceived by many. The pragmatic value of the American idea of independence, and franchise and of Parliamentarianism in other countries is, for it, weak and false to 'Real-Politics.' It looks like Absolutism in Government, but an Absolutism which aims at the co-operative, conjoint welfare through discipline of those over whom it places itself as Absolutism. It has been described as a sort of modern Socratesism relatively to the existent dynamics of politics. Its value in the consolidation and strengthening of a people, a nation, in an emergent crisis has been recognised as newly great. It has justified itself pragmatically, by its success, by its campaigns even against the State existing when it made itself and its force felt, especially ever since the now famous 'March to Rome'—or better 'March on Rome'—of the Black Shirt Fascists for which Benito Mussolini as Leader,—*Il Duce*—changing from leader-writing to private soldiering, had prepared himself previously in initiation and apprenticeship, as it were, through the baptism of fire, in the war trenches. It—Fascism—has made itself prospectively a vital force. The 'Balilla'—the Fascist organisation for better life for the children and youth, even little children, boys and girls of Italy, so named from a youth who had played a characteristically heroic part for Italy on a previous occasion—is the movement which attempts at ensuring the future living security of Fascism.

Appearing corporative, while recognising and embracing alike Capitalism, private capitalism in industry and commerce, and Labourism of whatever form, professing large sympathies, no doubt born of Mussolini's life and experiences, Fascism is itself neither of the nature of Capitalism nor of Labourism. It is Statism—of the nature of Statism. It approves or condones neither strikes nor 'lock outs.' Fascism looks above and from both Capital and Labour and production to the State, for which, and by which, it believes all these are. It is on the side of Capital if Capital is for the welfare of the State, and it is against it, if against; it is on

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the side of Labour if Labour is for the State and against it, if against. Similarly, it attempts at being both conservative and progressive, both traditionalistic and reforming. It is progressively for conserving forces and influences,—for religion, for reforms in education, industry, enterprises.

The psychological evolution and changes of Benito Mussolini's ideas should be of enormous interest. For long, by circumstances, birth, upbringing, education, associations, grown in Revolutionism, engaging himself in journalistic activities, editorially, leader-writingly, and in political circles, realistically, with adjusting ideas, the Mind had been amply prepared for a settled view of the importance and value in world situation of strength, strong control, regularised, regulated group activity, and feeling of discipline,—perhaps an echo in application to 'Real-Politics' of the rigour of formalism or Ciceronianism of a variety. And now practical disciplinism, Statism, Fascism to make Italy utter truly and strongly 'Viva l' Italia' among the changed peoples and States of Europe and a world with new forces comes from the Mind so prepared, as an idea for the governance of human institutions, human groups, peoples and governments.

Machiavelli, before, gave 'the Prince' with its lasting influence of definite idea of politics. The recurrent problem in the phenomena of this world in cosmic placing has given occasion for consideration and reconsideration of human nature and for enunciation of principles and ideas of politics for organised, integrated--while differentiated—purposeful, human life.

Again and again, from the time of the Homeric story of Ulysses, of Romus, and the origin of Rome which so many generations of humans have in turn learned with enkindled imagination—Nordic origin?—then from the XII Tables and legal sequences which are yet seen in legal systems,—the Republic, the Empire, the Roman Empire Christianised, and long after the Middle Ages, the Renaissance —Arts, Letters and Life and Humanities—through changing vicissitudes of historic scenes and circumstances, it has been

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the occasion and privilege of Italy. Dante Aligherri, St. Francis of Assissi, the Medici, Leonardo Da Vinci, Galileo—what great names among Humans to give leading ideas !

The future of Fascism will possibly depend on its 'spiritual' world-vitality,—Bergson's 'elan vital' in politics.

What has Bernard Shaw, Prophet (?) of the *Man and Superman* fame, Arch-intellect of Socialism, to say of the future of Fascism ?

Reviews

[*We shall be glad to review books in all Indian languages and in English, French, and German. Books for review should reach the office at least SIX WEEKS in advance of the day of publication of the Journal.*]

ENGLISH

Evolution of Hindu Moral Ideals—By Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer (The Kamala Lectures, Published by the Calcutta University—1935, Pp. 230.)

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer is well known in Southern India for his high character, his great scholarship and the remarkable sanity of his views on all political and social questions. In the Kamala Lectures which he delivered first in Calcutta and then in Madras, he has brought to bear his usual thoroughness and dispassionateness on the important question of the evolution of Hindu moral ideals. He has in his mind throughout—in fact he says so in his Preface—two groups of men from whom he differs. There are the so called Sanatanists who contend that the principles of the Hindu *Dharma Sastras* are eternal and immutable, and there are the Christian missionaries (of the type of Mr. John McKenzie, the author of ‘Hindu Ethics’) who contend that the Hindu religion has retarded the ethical and social progress of India. Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer proves that the contentions of both these groups are baseless and are the outcome only of ignorance or prejudice. The missionary attack is almost a spent force now and we need not worry ourselves about it. We cannot expect the professional missionary in India to do justice to Hinduism. Justice and toleration find very little space in Christian ethics. ‘Amid all the wonderful descriptions of charity, of love, of self-surrender,’ says Hobhouse, who is quoted on P. 173 of this book, ‘we hear very little of justice.’ All the same Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer devotes a whole chapter to the charges against Hindu ethics levelled by Christian missionaries and patiently examines them all and comes to the following conclusion :—

'None of the ethical systems, especially those founded on scriptural authority and tradition, can claim to be perfect. Every system has got its own crudities, defects and illogicalities. It would be unfair to institute a comparison between the ethical notions which find a place in the ancient literature of any nation with those prevalent at the present time and under modern conditions. Many of the defects of Hindu ethics which have been noticed in the previous chapters have their parallels in other systems of ethics also. If we find a spirit of discrimination between class and class or between the sexes in the system of law and justice recorded in the old Hindu law books, we find the same spirit permeating European jurisprudence down to very recent times and still characterising the laws relating to the treatment of the coloured races by the Whites. The inferiority of women in legal status and rights was as much a feature of the law in Christian Europe as it was of the Hindu law. The immunities and privileges enjoyed by the Brahmins in regard to taxation and other matters had their counterpart in the various immunities and privileges enjoyed by the nobles and the clergy down to the end of the eighteenth century.....'

Unlike the Christian missionary Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer impartially points out both the merits and the defects of the Hindu ethical system and remarks that 'the claim may with justice be made on behalf of Hinduism that it has made a valuable contribution to the ethical culture of the world in several important directions.'

Even if this reply to the enemies of Hinduism had been the main object of the book, it would have been worth while to write it. But the main object of the book is to point out the evolutionary character of the Hindu moral ideals in the past and to exhort the present day Hindus to maintain that character and work for orderly progress in the light of modern knowledge and according to the needs of the community. The Sanatanists all over the country will do well to ponder over the mass of evidence which Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer has culled from our *Dharma Sastras* and judge for themselves whether Hinduism has not adjusted its institutions, laws and customs to the needs of the time from age to age, and whether it is not our imperative duty to do the same in our

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own day if we are to remain faithful to our ancient seers and law-givers.

The greatest difficulty that lies in the path of the historian of Hindu moral ideals is the notorious disregard of chronology on the part of the commentators on the *Dharma Sastras* and their absurd attempt to ascribe equal validity to all *Smritis*, irrespective of the age in which they were written. Nor are these writers consistent in their advocacy. When it suits their purpose they quietly set aside some of the ancient ordinances and pin their faith to the illiberal regulations of a later day which are in accord with their own prejudices. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer gives us some telling instances. 'If the Vedas contemplate only post-puberty marriage and the later *Smriti* writers prescribe the marriage of girls who have not attained puberty, the authority of the Vedas is quietly ignored and it is said that the earlier rules were intended to be applied to a previous *Yuga*. If the later writers prohibit the performance of Vedic sacrifices in the present age, the rule is set aside in favour of the earlier rule which enjoins the performance of sacrifices as a duty of the householder.' Where the rule of an older *Smriti* is in favour of freedom and a later rule resists such freedom, as for example in the case of intermarriage or interdining between castes, the commentator has recourse to the theory that the earlier rule is inapplicable on account of the degeneracy of the human race, the real reason, of course, being that the rule goes against current custom. In this way there has been a progressive restriction of individual freedom as the country gradually lost its independence and the mind of the community became stagnant. The past was exalted at the expense of the present, so much so that even fifth-rate medieval commentators on *Dharma Sastras* came to be looked upon as authorities, while even the wise statesmen and conservative reformers of modern times were looked upon as rebels and the strange notion gained ground that the Hindu ethical ideals remained unchanged from time immemorial. Sir. P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer gives the lie direct to the latter statement. He says : 'The history of the ethical ideas of the Hindus presents two striking features. They have not remained stationary, but have changed in various directions from time to time. Secondly, there is no breach of continuity in the main web of Indian Culture.' This may be said to be the burden of his Kamala Lectures.

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In the various chapters of the book he examines such subjects as slavery, caste regulations, law and justice, the status of women, etc., and points out that in each of them there has been change in the past though not always for the better. But nowhere are the author's sagacity, wisdom and insight better shown than in the last chapter where he discusses the drift of modern tendencies and the future. Sir. P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer has not only made a very valuable contribution to the growing literature on Hindu religion and ethics, but also, like the true liberal that he is, he has pointed out the lines of progress which, while remaining faithful to our past, take into account the imperative needs of the present and the future.

D. S. SARMA

Daughters of the Dawn—By G. Venkatachalam, (6 St. John's Road, Bangalore, Pp. 70. Price Re 1).

When a writer like Mr. Venkatachalam, whose appreciation of art and of things artistic in life is so well known to the Indian public, selects for his subjects some of the flowers of the womanhood of modern India, we cannot easily suppress our eager expectations of an enjoyable hour in knowing his impressions of them, necessarily tinged with a frankness and familiarity all his own. Indeed, as we gaze at the daintiness of the little volume and the charming names filling the 'contents,' a feeling of envy overtakes us that Mr. Venkatachalam should have been almost the first to write of these women and choose his printers from Japan, the home of fascinating art traditions.

The admirable taste in the selection of the representative types of women is exclusively Mr. Venkatachalam's, and as he mentions in the Foreword, his book is 'in some small sense, a pioneering attempt.' Truly, one could not have wished for anything more to recommend the author to the good opinion of the reading public than his present venture of introducing to a larger world some of the noblest women, who 'have played or are playing a prominent part in the political and cultural life of India.'

Srimati Kamala Devi, the justly famous social worker and fighter in the cause of India, takes naturally a leading place in this galaxy. Then steps in the representative of that illustrious family of the Tagores, Pratima Devi, a symbol of all that signifies the culture and rare endowments cherished by

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that family.' Kamala Nehru, the stricken wife of Pandit Jawaharlal comes in for her share of our sympathy and appreciation ; for, nothing could be more genuine and noble than the import of her own words, 'It's all right to be great ; but it is nerve-wrecking.' Leila Sokhey or 'Menaka,' the Indian dancer, then appears before us claiming our attention as she should, having equipped herself with the technique of European dancing and taking to the revival of our own art with all the zeal of a convert. Sunayani Devi, quite appropriate to her sweet-sounding name, has an eye for the beautiful in nature and hence her consuming passion for painting. Then we get a glimpse of another reputed dancer, Srimati Hutheesing, holding her own sway over the enticing domain of 'Abhinaya.' Nalini Turkhad, the enthusiast in film acting, Rukmini Arundale of graceful form and enviable accomplishments, and Sofia Somji of indomitable courage in the gruesome national struggle, successively trip in before us. Then follow Padmavati, the promising warbler who was nipped quite in the bud, Daulat Sethna, the youthful Yogini with her enduring attractions for psychic and occult matters, Leela Row, now almost an international figure in the world of tennis, and lastly the personal friend of the author, Subbalakshmi, 'a silent, unknown daughter of India' made known by the author with a pen dipped in affection.

Mr. Venkatachalam in presenting us these women has given us no more than a mere narrative introduction to their lives and achievements. Though his language is easy and limpid, there is not in him the attempt at art, so very necessary to produce upon the readers a distinctness of impression of every one in this group, both of her mental and physical endowments. The result is that our eager interest is not altogether gratified by our perusal of the book. But in closing this review, we cannot refrain from expressing our partiality for the most winsome of these delicately chosen flowers, Padmavati, the Poetess whose untimely death deprived Indian literature of one its young hopefuls.

K. CILANDRASEKHARAN

Sita's Choice and other Plays.—By A. S. Panchapakesa Ayyar, M.A., I.C.S., F.R.S.L. [Published by the New India Trading Company, Madras. Price Re. 1-8-0.]

The purpose of his venture, Mr. A. S. P. Ayyar points

out, is deliberately to 'portray modern Indian life in this time of transition.' The dramatic form is harnessed to a polemical disquisition on Indian thought in crisis.

The two plays in this collection are 'Sita's Choice' and the 'Slave of Ideas' which is more of a sequel to 'Brahma's Way' (the Dialogue) than a play by itself. If the contents were ripped of their dramatic guise we should have little quarrel, but being plays (professedly) they must be judged by aesthetic and literary standards. The drama is in no wise a peg whereon to hang one's ideas haphazard and the stage is not a pulpit.

'Sita's Choice' is another of those plots in which a child-bride is wedded to a middle-aged (and here also tubercular) man of forty who is knocked out of the stage of life to facilitate a remarriage of the innocent unfortunate. In itself the theme is not arresting but frankly commonplace, and against the possible plea that the drama is a mirror of life I answer that it must be a concave mirror to compel interest, as we hardly sit through the boredom of over two hours in our stuffed theatres to witness life's commonplaces. The style of the play is lacking in crispness, point and brilliance.

The 'Slave of Ideas' is a maturer production, has more of the play-stuff in it, but as I have said it is by itself a torso of a play, being a sequel. The best way would have been to have written out 'Brahma's Way' as a deliberate, straightforward Shavian preface. As it is, the Dialogue forms the indispensable foundation on which the play rests. The play reads well, the longer speeches and the undramatic soliloquies excepted.

It falls without the province of the literary critic to sit in judgment on 'Brahma's Way,' for the Dialogue belongs rather to the sphere of theology and ethics. Anandaswami is Mr. A. S. P. Ayyar speaking and the Dialogue (monologue, is it ?) furnishes a brilliant body of religious theories, the validity or finality of which we will not attempt to discuss. But we would rather say that to explain dogma by dogma is, as it were, begging the question, and elaborating theories for Puranic anecdotes, however ingenious, just academic.

The positive test of a play is its enactability. But if G. B. S. can make of his iconoclastic paradoxes and audacious epigrams excellent drama, why not Mr. A. S. P. Ayyar?

P. R. RAMACHANDRA RAO

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KANNADA

Shri Ramacharita—Balakanda—By Sali Ramachandrarao. (Publishers: Sahitya Seva Samiti, Dharwar. Price, As. 12).

The book under review is by one of the elderly and eminent poets of modern Karnatak. The author, Mr. Sali Ramachandrarao, has already made a name for himself by his lyrical collections like Kusumanjali and Tilanjali. It was perhaps in his Abhisara, a rendering of Dr. Tagore's poem, that he first discovered himself as an engaging story teller in verse and charmed the young and old of his province.

The present work is a continuation of the same narrative strain in the same metre of what is nearly his creation. The theme is an age-old one, the story of Rama as in Valmiki's great epic. But the poet's main purpose is to concentrate vigorously on the essential legend of Rama and Sita and give to the Kannada public in a handy and elegant form the most favourite song of Indian tradition. About ten volumes are planned, of which the present one is the first, containing all the story-part of the Balakanda from the curse on Dasaratha to the marriage of Rama and Sita.

The success achieved herein is beyond doubt. There is an artistic restraint and skill in the choice of situations, an emotional oneness with the great characters of the epic, and a style which approaches the classical without being less popular. The popularity of the book is already a fact, considering the newspaper notices and the ready response of the common audience given to the author's own public readings. It is being felt everywhere that good Kannada poetry even of the polished type can no more be a sealed book and a closed fountain.

There are certain abiding traits in Mr. Sali's poetic self-expression. There is a unique sincerity and high feeling-tone in whatever he writes. A series of bitter experiences in personal life have in particular made the element of pathos a homely heritage for him. He can thus handle a pathetic situation with greater success than any other. In the perfect ardour of feeling, his language attains a natural sweetness and ease. But it also appears that the very warmth of emotion that typifies his poetry is so overwhelming as at times to deprive him of the white heat of imagination. Con-

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sequently, one often misses in his works that balance of qualities which marks all great poetry. The freshness of creative imagery is not always to be found side by side with the purity and fervour of emotion. There are, therefore, repetitions of ideas and phrases that do ring with sincerity but clip the very wings of poetic fancy. At the same time, credit must be given to a few original images of the present volume, like the one in which Rama sees Sita for the first time caressing a fond fawn in her garden. It is a splendid idea, in view of the later longing of Sita for the golden deer, that gives a decided turn to the epic tale.

It is indeed premature to judge in strict terms the poetic value of this work when we have only the first volume before us. Nor is it very wise to call it a very great poem at this stage. But who can deny its singular narrative charm and ease of diction even as it is? We, therefore, heartily welcome the poet for the new undertaking and congratulate the publishers for the enviable get-up of the volume.

R. S. MUGALI



Opinion of
Sir C. V. Raman, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., N.L.

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